ALBERTA RECREATIONAL VEHICLE CAMPGROUND DEVELOPMENT STUDY

Prepared for:

Alberta Economic Development
Alberta Resort and Campground Association
Private Campgrounds Operators Association
Alberta Motor Association

By:

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Alberta Economic Development commissioned this study, titled *Alberta Recreational Vehicle Campground Development Study*.

The study examined the supply trends and market demand of RV campers and provided recommendations for Alberta campground supply improvements that could be utilized by operators and developers to increase profitability and accommodate future market needs.

It should be noted that this study was conducted by an independent consultant and does not represent the view or policy of the Alberta Government nor any commitment to implementation.

The Government of Alberta disclaims any liability in negligence or otherwise for any loss or damage, which may occur as a result of reliance upon the material contained in this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The recreation vehicle marketplace in North America has changed dramatically in the past decade. RV units have become wider, longer, and more powerful. The ubiquity of the SUV in North America has created new demand for lightweight, towable RV units.

RV sales have grown to reach levels not seen since the late 1970's. The range of units has broadened, and the markets are purchasing more tent trailers, light trailers, fifth wheels and van conversion vehicles.

The markets are also expected to change in the future. The baby boom demographic will generate more RV purchases, and prospects for RV sales in the coming decade are bright.

These changes have impacted and will impact the RV campground product in North America. Have Alberta campgrounds responded to these changes in demand? Does Alberta offer the RV campground product that serves existing market and anticipates emerging markets? Are there market segments Alberta is not servicing now, and is there a significant opportunity to serve this market?

This exploratory investigation of the RV campground sector seeks to respond to these questions and to give some direction to operators as to what they might consider in campground improvements in the coming years.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the study could be described in concise terms to be to highlight the areas of product and service improvement that represent opportunities on which RV camping suppliers in Alberta can capitalize.

The key objectives of this report are to:

- Summarize the existing supply of RV campground facilities and services in Alberta;
- Assess changing campground design requirements implied by changes in RV purchasing trends in North America.
- Develop a market profile of the RV camping market for Alberta, and assess how trends and growth markets may affect facility design.
- Characterize the supply of "exemplary practices" camping services in select regions of the world and assess the basis of their success.
- Identify camper segments and describe key characteristics of each segment.
- Identify opportunities for Alberta to be more competitive, Alberta's product/market match, and viable facility/service enhancement opportunities for operators in Alberta.

Methodology

The approach to this study was to focus on four basic sources of information:

- Research and review of existing written material, research reports, articles and papers.
- Data re-analysis of survey research data.
- Internet-based research.
- Focus group research with the Alberta Resort and Campground Association (ARCA).
- Telephone interviews with representative associations, operators, manufacturers, rental businesses, and representatives of various RV organizations in North America.

This report deals only with the subset of all campgrounds in Alberta referred to as "RV" campgrounds. The focus of the approach was to isolate those campgrounds that provided the services of interest to the main body of the RV market. Basic services are water, power and sewer services – the "hookups" as they refer to them in the RV literature. This was the main feature differentiating a RV campground from another campground in Alberta.

The results of this study are representative of the input received and should be considered exploratory research. The research was not based on statistical samples, but on "key stakeholder" input, and reflects more the experience of "experts" than the results of a large sample of respondents. It should be taken in this context.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

RV Campground Supply

- Alberta's 359 RV campgrounds, defined as described above, offer 33,122 sites at a variety of service levels and prices.
- The average size of the RV campground in Alberta is 92 units. The range of sizes, however, is significant: for National Parks (NP) it is 180 units, for Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas (PPRA), 93 units; for County, Municipality and Municipal District RV campgrounds it is 50-55 units; and for private operators the average size is 93 units. The market share of RV campgrounds and campsites in Alberta, by type of ownership, include:

TABLE 1:
MARKET SHARE OF RV CAMPGROUNDS AND CAMPSITES IN ALBERTA

	Campgrounds	*Sites*
Private Operators	45%	45%
Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas	30%	30%
Municipalities	10%	6%
National Parks	7%	14%
Clubs	4%	3%
Counties	3%	2%
Municipal Districts	1%	1%

- A low percentage of total sites have the higher levels of service sought by some RV segments – 30/50 amp power, pull throughs, full hookups, and community-focused services.
- Alberta sites lack variety of tenure – few offer condo sites, motels, RV rental, tent rental and other options.

Trends Affecting RV Camping

The baby boom generation is the major force impacting the RV market. This will continue as this population ages. RV ownership is forecast to grow in the order of 20-32% in the coming decade or more based largely on this demographic. RV rental markets are forecast to grow strongly in the coming years. As a result of this demographic shift, demand for "quality" in RV campgrounds will increase, and the market will be willing to pay for higher service standards.

RV Camping Markets

- Recent estimates based on CTS/ITS data are that of a total of 5.1 million camping person-nights (RV and non-RV) were spent in Alberta campgrounds in 1999, broken down by origin as follows:

TABLE 2:
CAMPING PERSON-NIGHTS SPENT BY VISITORS IN ALBERTA 1999

	Person-Nights (Thousands)	***Percent***
Albertans	3,300	64%
Other Canadians	700	14%
U.S.	460	9%
Overseas	650	13%
TOTAL	**5,100**	**100%**

- It is estimated that Canadians spent 1.7 million *household camping-nights* in Alberta in 1999. Assuming international visitors add some 20 % to household camping nights, it is estimated that over 2 million household camping nights are spent in Alberta annually. At average daily expenditures per travel party of a conservative $50 Canadian, these direct expenditures of this camping market are over $100 million annually. It is estimated that 70%-80% of these campers are RV campers.
- International visitation to Banff and Jasper National Parks regions are higher than in other areas of Alberta, accounting for 46% of camper nights in Banff and 37% in Jasper. Market share by region is illustrated in the following table.

- Total camping person nights in Alberta, broken out by Tourism Destination Region, is illustrated following:

TABLE 3:
ESTIMATED CAMPING VISITATION IN PERSON-NIGHTS TO ALBERTA'S TOURISM DESTINATION REGIONS, 1999

Region (TDR)	*Person Night (Thousands)*	*Percent*
Alberta's North	370	7.3%
Edmonton and Area	300	5.9%
Central Alberta	1,900	37.5%
Calgary and Area	330	6.5%
Alberta's South	690	13.6%
Alberta's Rockies	1,470	29.2%
TOTAL	**5,060**	**100%**

Market Segments

Five camping market segments were identified: the RV Rental/Adventurer; The RV Full Timer; The Destination Traveler; The Club Traveler; and The "Independent" RV Camper. Each market segment demonstrates different characteristics and seeks a different experience in the RV campground product.

RV Camping markets have common needs for basic services – clean washrooms, 30 amp power, water, sewer/pumpout, level sites with good separation, wide enough for modern units, and designed for pull through.

Product Segments

Four product segments are evident: Urban Focused RV Campgrounds; Franchise RV campgrounds; Destination RV Campgrounds; and the RV "Community Camp" Resort

Alberta is serviced well only in the Destination RV Campground segment, which itself has some challenges. Variety of accommodation types and tenure in the RV campground is a key indicator of business success, and Alberta RV campgrounds have less variety than "exemplary" RV campgrounds. RV campgrounds in other jurisdictions are "rated" with reliable indicators of service levels and quality. Although Alberta private campgrounds are rated by available systems (Trailer Life), all campgrounds are not rated.

Alberta's major tourism generators – our mountains and scenic areas - have primarily been served by public campgrounds. These campgrounds have lower service levels than some RV segments desire, but occupy some of the key destination areas for visitors. Conversely, Alberta's highly-serviced RV campgrounds are well located for resident markets but not as well for visitor markets.

While prices of Alberta's RV campgrounds are comparable in Canada, they are priced below that of "exemplary" RV campgrounds, and offer lower levels of service than those parks.

RV Clubs, and some of the market segments from outside Alberta (full timers, destination markets), represent a large market that seeks quality, branded RV campgrounds. Alberta could improve its communication with these market segments.

Alberta's Competitive Position

Full service RV campgrounds near major cities, branded RV campgrounds offering 30-50 amp service/full hookups/pull throughs, appear to be less prevalent in Alberta than elsewhere.

Alberta's Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas (PPRA) represent a specific challenge for Alberta. PPRA sites tend to be located in many of the most desirable destination areas, yet they do not offer the level of RV facility desired by some market segments. While this does not necessarily reduce Alberta's PPRA competitiveness, since most competitive Provincial park/recreation systems offer similar products, it may be a strategic disadvantage to attracting the RV camping market.

What is also evident from this research is that other regions are moving toward RV camping "chains", branded developments, higher service levels, and more recreation programming. If Alberta does not evolve some of its product in this direction, it will not win a share of these markets.

OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE ALBERTA MORE COMPETITIVE

RV Campground Improvements

Alberta's competitive position in the RV camping market could be improved by encouraging the following RV campground improvements:

- Foster development of a variety of accommodation types and tenure options within *existing RV resorts* by reducing or removing impediments such as some municipal regulations, inappropriate taxation, and inappropriate utility/CSA regulations.
- Encourage variety in the *RV destination campground* – variety of tenure types, variety of accommodation types, variety in pricing in order to make RV campgrounds stronger attractions as well as strong businesses.

- Review of municipal planning development regulations affecting RV campgrounds. A focus on enabling a variety of accommodation types, of redressing taxation issues, and of ensuring safe, secure, appropriately serviced RV campgrounds should apply.

- Government departments should work together to ensure RV destination RV campground levels of service are provided (where appropriate) in strategic PPRA campgrounds to improve appeal to the RV market.

- Encourage redesign of existing RV campgrounds to better serve the newer RV units, including:
  - Wider sites with more site separation and well located connection stations to handle multiple-slide units;
  - Longer sites, with either pull through capacity or design for wider turning radius; and
  - Long, level RV pads at sites, paved where appropriate.

- Encourage appropriate levels of utility services in RV campgrounds, focusing on a minimum 30 amp service. More sites with 50 amp service are desirable in some RV campgrounds. Converging technologies mean the RV campground needs to provide for the changing needs of visitors relative to computer and communications connections.

- Encourage development of additional value added services in RV campgrounds – bicycle, boat, or other appropriate rentals, retail services and other services that contribute net margin to the operation.

RV Campground Development in Alberta

- Encourage development of full service RV campgrounds near urban areas:
  - Upgrade well located, urban focused RV campgrounds to competitive standard where appropriate; and
  - Encourage affiliation of urban RV campgrounds with clubs/travel guides where appropriate.

- Encourage upgrading of specific, strategically located PPRA campgrounds to destination RV campground level.

- Foster development, through interdepartmental and industry efforts, of RV destination RV campgrounds in strategic, destination areas of the province.

RV Campground Image and Positioning

- Encourage all RV campgrounds in Alberta to be rated by Trailer Life. Maintain updated ratings of Alberta's RV campgrounds.
- Communicate the major RV campground standards, ratings by outside organizations (Trailer Life, Woodall's), and club affiliations (Good Sam, Coast to Coast) through available communication channels. Address communications with the "RV Club" segment through research and planning.
- Ensure that the RV rental market has access to communication about the variety of camping experiences provided in areas "off the beaten path" in Alberta.

Conclusion

The exploratory nature of this work precludes truly conclusive statements. However, there is sufficient evidence to suggest an opportunity for Alberta to improve its position in the RV marketplace by improving both the physical design and the range of services offered in our RV campgrounds.

Additional work would be beneficial in this case, as there are major gaps in the data. It would be beneficial to know the actual number of RV units owned in Alberta, the number of active RV users, the volume of RV usage in campgrounds, and the specific services and amenities desired by these markets. It would also be good to know market origins, seasonality of usage, market segments characteristics and visitation behaviour. Finally, research is needed concerning why some market segments (Full timers, Clubs) apparently do not visit Alberta in significant numbers. Some of these data gaps could be filled through a survey of RV campers in Alberta's RV campgrounds and sites. This might be a first step toward a more solid understanding of this market.

It is recognized that some of the initiatives referred to in this report may represent a major challenge. Upgrading existing RV campgrounds to prevailing standards may reduce the number of sites in order to create wider or pull through sites. The revenue yield may decrease as a result. Alberta RV campground operators also face the significant challenge of a short RV "season", high site development/servicing costs in many areas, and difficulty in obtaining conventional financing. These issues should be addressed by stakeholders as they move forward with responses to the challenges set out in this report.

The issues documented in this report should be reviewed in the context of design standards applicable to RV campgrounds. A joint review by Provincial departments and an Alberta municipal jurisdiction with significant experience with the wide variety of RV campground types identified in this report, would be desirable.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The recreation vehicle marketplace in North America has changed dramatically in the past decade, with some of the key changes including the following:

- Booming fifth wheel sales at the expense of tent campers, travel trailers and other smaller units were characteristic in the 80's and early 90's. Today sales of smaller towable units have increased in market share significantly and there is a hiatus in the large motorized RV unit sales. Annual unit sales recently approached levels reached in the boom years of 1979/80.
- International travel wholesalers have forecast a continuation of the double-digit growth rates in RV rental from international origins (experienced in the past five years) to the Northwest (i.e., NW North America) for the foreseeable future.
- An aging baby boom market is responsible for increased sales of small towable units in the past few years. This market segment will be the growth market in North America between 2000 and 2015. The industry anticipates growing sales volumes, increased rental demand, and increasing demand for quality campground experiences.
- The full "fleshing out" of the recreation vehicle, so that it is a "full service cottage" on wheels…. Television, cable hookup, VHS, microwave, convection ovens and surround stereo sound are now available as standard features or as affordable options on virtually all sizes of recreational vehicles. Washer/dryer systems, dishwashers, and other energy/water consuming systems are available on larger units. These changes are anticipated to affect RV campground demand.
- Weight Reductions: New materials have reduced chassis weight, allowing for more payloads or more weighty features. Now granite or Corian countertops are common in upscale units. Thus, total vehicle weight has not dropped, but payload and amenities have increased.
- Chassis Improvements: Chassis improvements in the mid 90's brought the "wide body" into the RV world. Initially applied primarily to motorhomes, this change increased the size of these units as well as their ability to incorporate "slide-outs". The technology soon gravitated to fifth wheels, trailers and even to tent trailers. Today, many units over 30 feet in length sport one, two or even three "sliders". The basic Ford chassis, following the wide body chassis redesign, increased GVW by some 22%.

- Power Improvements: The replacement of the Chevrolet 454 motor and the Ford 460 motors with the new Triton V10 and the Chev Vortec engines increased power on these wide body units, decreasing fuel consumption for equal weight. However, what occurred was the building of bigger units with more weight, leaving fuel consumption about the same.
- The SUV, Trucks and Towables: The New engines also power the increasingly popular pickup trucks and SUVs coming into the market. Smaller, lower weight and aerodynamic towable units were developed for the SUV market. Large fifth wheel units could be developed and towed by the increasingly powerful yet luxurious pick up trucks.
- During the same period, the diesel pusher motorhome units came into their own. Offering a variety of engines with torque ratings from 550 foot pounds to 1750 foot pounds, motor homes exceeding 41 feet became increasingly common. The ultimate units are now based on motorcoach chassis, approach 45 feet in length, cost in excess of $Cdn 1.0 million and in some states are only permitted in certain types of RV campgrounds.
- Car Hauling technology has also changed dramatically. Introduction of the "hydraulic car hitch" eliminated car "Chariots" from the market and made it far more affordable and easier for large units to haul the small all-wheel drive SUV's that had come into the market. These are lightweight, go anywhere units that do not effect fuel economy significantly. The introduction of the fully enclosed, lightweight, affordable car hauling aluminum trailers also increased the number of RVs hauling vehicles, motorcycles, ATV's snowmobiles and other equipment in enclosed trailers. The upshot of this change was to increase the total length of the largest RV/trailer unit to 65 feet or more.

The impact of these changes in market and vehicle supply has been rather dramatic. As manufacturers measure and anticipate market demand, RV campgrounds that service these vehicles arguably have also had to change. Increasingly 50 amp service, wider sites, pull through sites, and other amenities are being supplied by some of the leading campgrounds in North America. The campground product appears to be evolving as we pass the millennium.

Alberta campgrounds appear to be experiencing the effects of these market changes, as casual observation confirms:

- Over 70% of campers arrive at Provincial campgrounds in some form of RV. With many private campgrounds the figure is closer to 100%, and many clients are seasonal residents rather than itinerant users.
- RV units up to 65 feet in length (including the car hauler) can be observed frequently lumbering down Alberta highways, looking for suitable camping sites.

- Sites with full services and large "pull throughs" are booked completely even though the units are cramped together because "sliders" have increased width of units.
- Residential RV campgrounds with full services, community centres and full amenities have increasingly been developed in Western Canada to service the market.

Have Alberta campgrounds responded to these changes in demand? Does Alberta offer the RV campground product that serves existing market and anticipates emerging markets? Are there market segments Alberta is not servicing now, and is there a significant opportunity to serve this market?

This exploratory investigation of the RV campground sector seeks to respond to these questions and to give some direction to operators as to what they might consider in campground improvements in the coming years.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the study could be described in concise terms to be to highlight the areas of product and service improvement that represent opportunities on which RV Camping suppliers in Alberta can capitalize.

1.3 Objectives

The key objectives of this report are to:

- Summarize the existing supply of RV campground facilities and services in Alberta.
- Assess changing campground design requirements implied by changes in RV purchasing trends in North America.
- Develop a market profile of the RV camping market for Alberta, and assess how trends and growth markets may affect facility design.
- Characterize the supply of "exemplary practices" camping services in select regions of the world and assess the basis of their success.
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- Identify opportunities for Alberta to be more competitive, Alberta's product/market match, and viable facility/service enhancement opportunities for operators in Alberta.

1.4 Methodology

The approach to this study was to focus on four basic sources of information:

- Research and review of existing written material, research reports, articles and papers.
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The results of this study are representative of the input received and should be considered exploratory research. The research was not based on statistical samples, but on "key stakeholder" input, and reflects more the experience of "experts" than the results of a large sample of respondents. It should be taken in this context.

2.0 RV CAMPGROUND SUPPLY IN ALBERTA

A review of campgrounds in Alberta that specifically offer services applicable to the RV camper was conducted. A database of the results of this work was created for future use by Alberta Economic Development and the RV camping industry in Alberta.

Information from a total of 359 RV campgrounds representing 33,122 sites was profiled using existing sources of information, including:

- Woodall's: The Campground Guide: 2001, Canada;
- Alberta's Campground Guide;
- Parks Canada Campground Guide; and
- Provincial Park Site Facility Guide.

The most current, 2001 Woodall's Guide was the primary reference document. However, the database was enhanced with information from the other references when this information was not included in Woodall's Guide. No other methods were used to verify this published data, as such effort was not anticipated in this study. All results in this chapter are based on these published reports.

Definition of RV Campground

The focus of the approach was to isolate those campgrounds that provided the services of interest to the main body of the RV market. Basic services are water, power and sewer services – the "hookups" as they refer to them in the RV literature. The presence of a reference to "hookups" – either power, water, or electrical hookups – in Woodall's Guide would cause the campground to be included as an "RV campground" for the purpose of this study. The Alberta Campground Guide was searched subsequently, and those campgrounds not listed in Woodall's Guide but having references to "RV Park, RV Campground" or at least one of the three basic utilities were incorporated into the database. Thus, the database captures a very high percentage of those campgrounds in Alberta that would reasonably be called RV campgrounds. These RV campgrounds represent a subset of all campgrounds in Alberta.

Database Definitions

The data elements captured in the database include the following:

- ***Location*** – indicated by the nearest community to the campground.

- ***Tourism Destination Region*** – referring to the TDR within which the campground is located.

- ***ARCA Member*** – indicating whether the RV campground is a member of the Alberta Resort and Campground Association.

- ***Woodall Recreation*** – refers to the "Recreation rating (1-5) given the facility by Woodall's Guide, for those facilities with a Woodall's rating.
- ***Woodall Facility*** – refers to the "Facility" rating (1-5) given the facility by Woodall's Guide, for those facilities with a Woodall's rating.
- ***Coast to Coast*** – flags those RV campgrounds that are members of the Coast to Coast chain. No other chain affiliations were indicated in the literature.
- ***Price*** – due to the variety of ways of expressing price, it was decided to simply explain the approach for each RV campground, rather than to try to convert all RV campgrounds to a common "per site-night" basis. The variety of approaches is reflected in the database.
- ***Definition*** – this refers to the definition used in pricing sites in the RV campground.
- ***Operator*** – this data captures whether the status of the operator, using categories as set out in the literature:
  - **M** – Municipal;
  - **CO** – County;
  - **MD** – Municipal District;
  - **PPRA** – Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas:
  - **NP** – National Parks;
  - **PO** – Private Owner; and
  - **CL** – Club.
- ***Environment*** – description of the physical surroundings of the campground as provided in the literature.
- ***Sites*** – refers to the total number of campsites in the RV campground.
- ***Full Hookups*** – refers to the number of sites indicated as having "full hookups", meaning water, power, and sewer services at the site.
- ***Pull Thrus*** – Number of sites configured for vehicle pull through.
- ***Amps 15*** – refers to those sites with 15 amp electrical service.
- ***Amps 20*** – refers to those sites with 20 amp electrical service.
- ***Amps 30*** – refers to those sites with 30 amp electrical service.
- ***Amps 50*** – refers to those sites with 50 amp electrical service.
- ***Indoor Pool*** – indicates those sites which have identified an indoor pool.

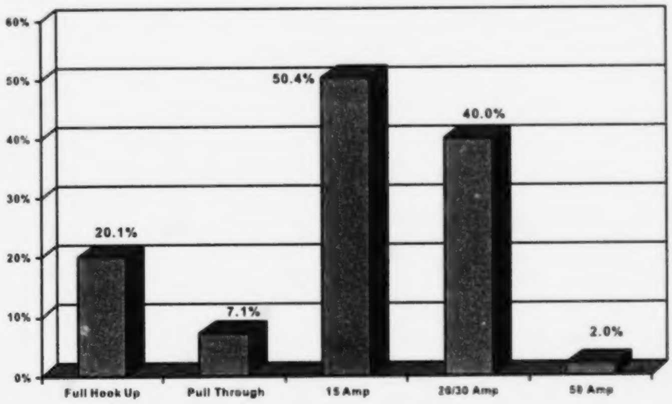
- ***Swimming Pool*** – indicates campgrounds with a pool, with the assumption being that if it is not identified as an indoor pool, then the site has an outdoor pool.
- ***Playground*** – refers to campgrounds with a community playground.
- ***Dump Station*** – refers to RV campground with on-site sewage dumping stations.
- ***Handicap*** – refers to RV campgrounds that offer handicap accessible sites.

2.1 Findings from Supply Side Assessment

The assessment of RV Campground facilities in Alberta yields the following observations.

- Despite significant effort by different organizations, a uniform format, symbolism, and comprehensive content for identifying and rating RV campgrounds by type of service is not offered in Alberta.
- The database of 359 RV campgrounds represents all those that suggest in any way that they serve the RV camping market. A total of 33,122 RV sites are represented in this database.

TABLE 1:
Percent of RV Campgrounds Offering Services, by Type of Service



Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

- Approximately 20.1% of the sites, or 6,651 sites in Alberta (Table 1) are identified as "full hook-up" sites, offering water, sewer and electrical services to the site. While we are aware that all of these sites offer electrical hookups, we are not aware of what amperage is offered at these sites.
- There are a total of 2,335 "pull-through" sites among the 33,122 total RV camping sites. This represents 7.1% of total RV camping sites in Alberta (Table 1).
- In addition to the "full-hookup" information, the literature offers information on electrical service to the sites, an important consideration for RV campers. A total of 181 campgrounds, 50.4% of the total, offer at least 15 amp service to the site. Where the campground has not indicated the amperage of service, it has been assumed the service is 15 amp only. Some 40% (144 sites) offer 20 or 30 amp service, with the majority of these represented by 30 amp service (Table 1).

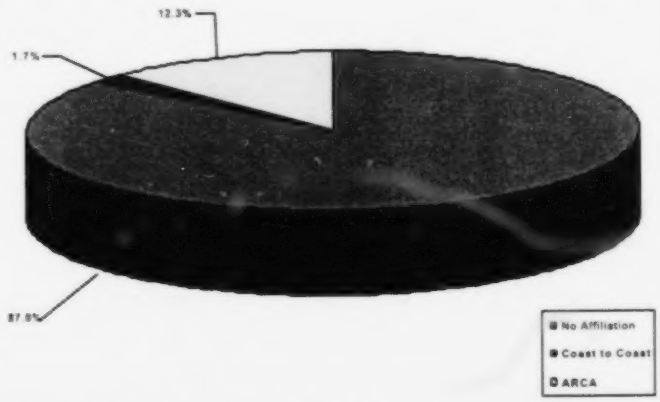
- Only 8 of 359 RV campgrounds in Alberta, or 2.2% of campgrounds, offer 50 amp service to the site (Table 1).

- If these data on electrical hookups can be interpreted to be additive, then almost 93% of RV campgrounds in Alberta, a total of 333 campgrounds offer electrical service of 15 amps or more.

- Only 6 RV Campgrounds in Alberta indicate they are members of "Coast to Coast", the chain membership-based RV campgrounds in America.

- Only 44 of the 359 RV campgrounds are members of ARCA, the Alberta Resort and Campground Association. This represents 12.3% of all campgrounds, including publicly owned camping facilities. However, ARCA members represent 19.1% of all privately owned RV campsites in Alberta.

TABLE 2:
Recorded Affiliation of RV Campgrounds in Alberta



Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

2.1.1 Distribution of RV Campgrounds by Tourism Destination Region

- The distribution of campgrounds and sites by Tourism Destination Region is represented in the table following. The Central TDR has a 41.5% share of RV campgrounds and a 40% share of RV sites in Alberta. Outside this central TDR, the share of product drops significantly.

TABLE 3:
MARKET SHARE,
RV CAMPGROUNDS AND SITES BY TOURISM DESTINATION REGION

TDR	*# RV Campgrounds*	*% RV Campgrounds*	*# RV Campsites*	*% RV Campsites*
1: Calgary	35	9.8%	3,887	11.7%
2: Edmonton	19	5.3%	1,852	5.6%
3: South	65	18.1%	5,003	15.1%
4: Central	149	41.5%	13,288	40.1%
5: North	43	11.9%	2,814	8.5%
6: Rockies	48	13.4%	6,278	19.0%
TOTAL	**359**	**100%**	**33,122**	**100%**

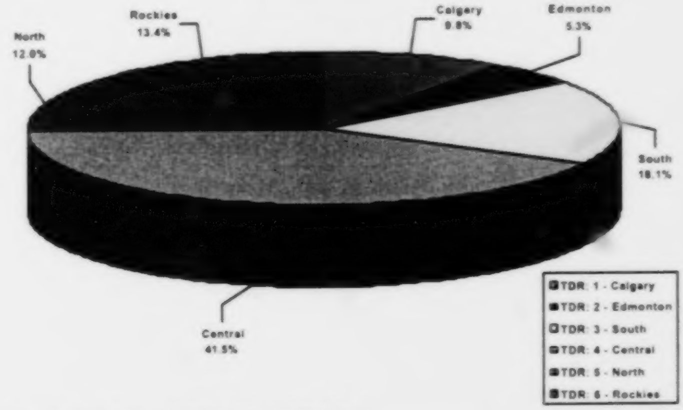
Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

The Central TDR also represents 48% of the total ARCA members and 44% of all Woodall's rated sites. Central region has only two of six Coast to Coast members, the South region having three of six, with the final member being a Calgary TDR operator.

➢ Looking at other services by region, while less instructive, does illustrate where the services for the RV market are located:

- Over 49% of full hookup sites are in Central region.
- Seven of the 13 outdoor pools and the only indoor pool are in central region.
- 47% of handicap accessible RV campgrounds are in Central region.

TABLE 4:
Market Share of RV Campgrounds by Tourism Destination Region



Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

- The pattern of ownership by region is not surprising:

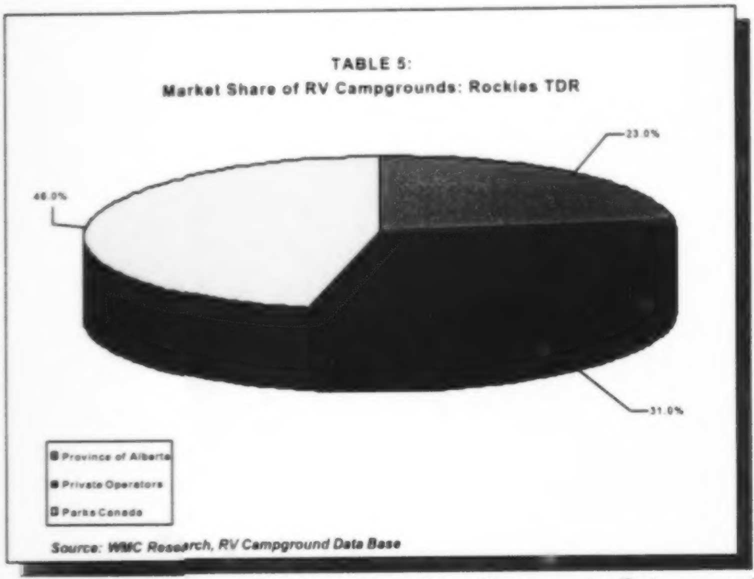


TABLE 5:
Market Share of RV Campgrounds: Rockies TDR

Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

  - Parks Canada's campgrounds accounts for 46% of RV campgrounds in the Rockies TDR. Private operators account for 31% and Provincial RV campgrounds account for the remaining 23%.
  - Municipalities are more significant owners of RV campgrounds in the Central and South regions than they are in Calgary or Edmonton. Some 73% of all municipal RV campgrounds can be found in these the South and Central regions, while only 11% are located in Edmonton and Calgary combined.

- Between the Calgary and Edmonton TDRs, major urban regions account for 15% of RV campgrounds in Alberta. However, Calgary has 35 RV campgrounds, while Edmonton has only 19 campgrounds. Calgary has over twice the RV campsites as does Edmonton, this despite comparable populations. The difference between the two regions is almost entirely attributable to the differing number of private operators – 31 in Calgary and only 12 in Edmonton. One can infer from this data, that the influence of the Canadian Rockies on tourism, visitation to Calgary is strongly felt in the RV sector.

2.1.2 RV Campground Ratings

- A total of 95 of the 359 RV campgrounds, (or 26.5%) carry Woodall's ratings, either the recreation rating, the facility rating, or ratings on both recreation and facilities. Comparable data for the Columbia Valley in B.C. determined that 53% of their RV campgrounds carried a Woodall's rating.
- In total only 7.2% of Alberta campgrounds carry a Woodall's 4W or 5W rating either for recreation or facilities. Comparable data for the B.C. RV campgrounds in the Columbia

valley show that 53% of campgrounds were Woodall's rated and that 12% were rated 4W or 5W. Woodall's rating system is explained in Appendix 1.

The most highly rated campgrounds in Alberta, based on Woodall's ratings, are listed below:

TABLE 6:
HIGHLY RATED WOODALL'S RV CAMPGROUNDS IN ALBERTA

Name	***Location***	***Recreation Rating***	***Facility Rating***
Pine Creek	Calgary	2W	5W
Leisure Campgrounds	Pine Lake	5W	3W
Green Acres (under reconstruction)	Pine Lake	5W	4W
Ol' MacDonald's	Stettler	5W	2W
Sherks RV Park	Valleyview	2W	5W

Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

- While the Woodall's rating system is not held up as the only relevant rating, it does provide a relative indicator of the level of services. Many Alberta campgrounds may not have chosen to be rated by Woodall's. Thus an "unrated" site does not necessarily mean a lower quality RV campground.

2.1.3 Distribution of RV Campgrounds by Type of Ownership

The database can be reviewed by type of ownership of RV campgrounds. The table following illustrates the observations below.

TABLE 7:
DISTRIBUTION OF ALBERTA RV CAMPGROUNDS BY OWNERSHIP

	# RV Campgrounds	***# Sites in RV Campgrounds***	***# Full Hooks***	***# Pull Through***
PPRA: Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas	106	9,840	8	523
CL: Club	15	1,022	286	64
CO: County	10	505	13	0
NP: National Parks	26	4,686	494	108
M: Municipality	37	1,886	391	100
MD: Municipal District	4	224	8	0
PO: Private Operator	161	14,959	5,541	1,540
TOTAL	**359**	**33,122**	**6,651**	**2,335**

Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

Footnote: Mount Kidd RV Campground, located in Kananaskis Country has been counted as a private operation in the database.

- Almost half (45%) the RV campgrounds in Alberta are privately owned, and these RV campgrounds represent over 45% of the total RV sites.
- Almost 30% of RV campgrounds and RV campsites are found in provincial parks.
- National parks represent only 7.2% of RV campgrounds, but they account for 14% of all RV campsites.

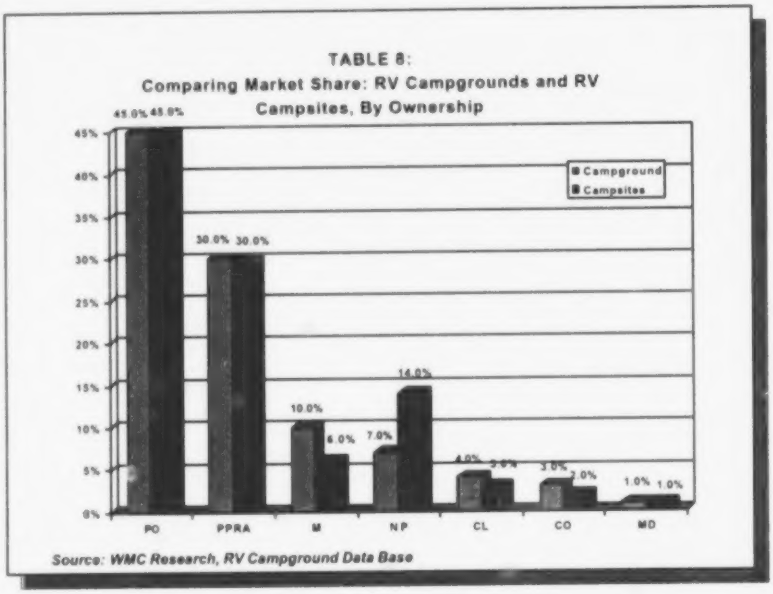


TABLE 8:
Comparing Market Share: RV Campgrounds and RV Campsites, By Ownership

Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

- Municipalities represent 10.3% of RV campgrounds but only 5.7% of RV campsites. Counties and MDs together account for under 4% of RV campgrounds and only 2.2% of RV campsites.
- Clubs account for 4.2% of RV campgrounds and 3.1% of campsites.
- The average size of RV campground in Alberta is 92 units. However, the range is significant. Provincial RV campgrounds are close to the Alberta average at 93 units. National Park campgrounds average 180 units, while County, Municipality and Municipal District sites average around 50-55 units. Private operators average 93 units per site, again close to the Alberta average.

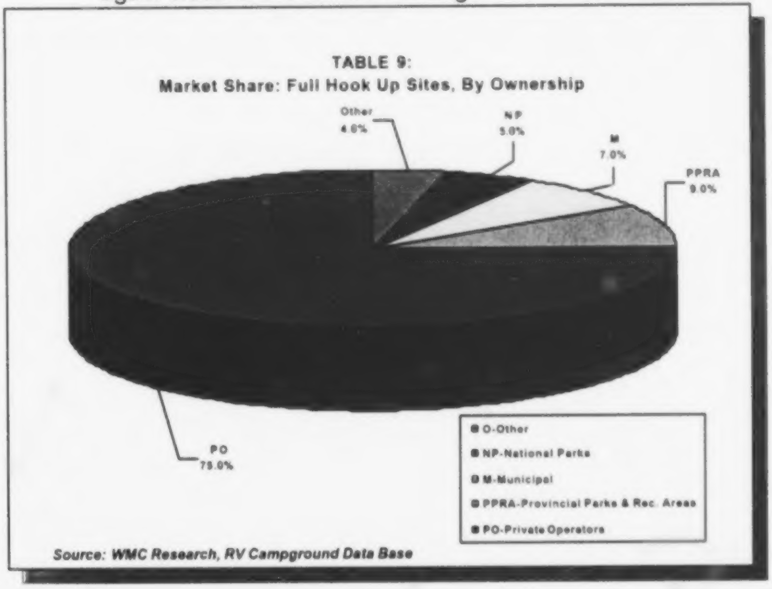


TABLE 9:
Market Share: Full Hook Up Sites, By Ownership

Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

- The incidence of full hook ups and pull through sites shows a significant difference between ownership categories.

- Private ownership RV campgrounds account for 82% of all full hookup sites and 66% of all pull through sites in the

RV campgrounds in Alberta, despite accounting for only 45% of all RV campsites.

- About 36.4% of privately owned RV campsites have full hook ups, followed by Clubs (28%) and then Municipalities (21%). Parks Canada campgrounds have only 10.5% with full hook ups, and for Provincial Parks and Recreation Area sites the figure is less than 1%.
- Private operators also lead in the development of pull through sites, with 10.3% of sites. Parks Canada offers 2.3% of RV sites as pull through, while for Provincial RV campgrounds it is 5.3%.
- Private operators have 66% of all sites with pull throughs, while Provincial RV campgrounds represent 22.4% of all pull through sites.

➢ The power supply of RV campgrounds is important to operators and to RV owners. While 15 amps is a basic requirement, it is only equivalent to the amperage allowed in one plug in a household circuit. At least 30 amps is needed to support air conditioning as well as basic RV appliances operating at the same time. The largest units require 50 amps to run all services. The story in Alberta:

- No RV campgrounds in provincial parks have 50 amp service. Only 14 of 106 PPRA RV campgrounds (13%) offer 20 or 30 amp service. Some 28 campgrounds or 26% of provincial RV campgrounds have 15 amp service.
- All eight campgrounds indicating they had 50 amp service were private operators. Of the 161 privately operated campgrounds, 66% offered at least 15 amp service; 100 campgrounds, or 62% offered 20 or 30 amp service. Some 59% of all 15 amp campgrounds are privately operated, while 69% of all campgrounds providing 20 or 30 amp service are privately operated.

➢ Other services are considered important in the RV campground:

- Dumping stations for the RV are critical. On average, 60% of RV campgrounds have dumping stations. While 62% of privately operated RV campgrounds have dump stations, these RV campgrounds also have a high incidence of "full hookups". Some 84% of municipal RV campgrounds had dump stations, the highest of the group, while for clubs the figure is over 66%. Provincial RV campgrounds had just over 48% with dumping stations.
- Over 73% of clubs, 78% of municipal RV campgrounds, 57% of provincial RV campgrounds and 58% of private campgrounds have playgrounds. Under 35% of National Parks RV campgrounds offered playgrounds.
- Private operators had the most handicapped accessible RV campgrounds, at around 44% of campgrounds offering the service in some sites. The figure was

35% for provincial RV campgrounds. National Parks were lowest with only one of 26 RV campgrounds offering handicapped accessible sites.

- The only indoor pool was at a privately operated RV campground, as were 12 of the 13 outdoor pools. The thirteenth outdoor pool was at a club operated RV campground. No pools were operated by the publicly funded RV campgrounds in Alberta.
- Of the six RV campgrounds offering phone/modem service to the site, five were private operators. The sixth was a municipal RV campground.

➢ Of the 44 ARCA members in the database, 36 are private operators. Six are from provincial RV campgrounds, although these members of ARCA are likely members of the Provincial Campground Operators Association (PCOA) and are the contracted private sector operators who run the majority of provincial RV campgrounds in Alberta. Finally, two Municipal RV campgrounds are members of ARCA.

➢ In total, 95 RV campgrounds had some Woodall's rating, either for facilities or for recreation or for both. Of these rated sites, 83 RV campgrounds, 87% of the total were privately operated sites. Only one provincial site was rated, while six club sites had ratings. Three municipal sites were rated by Woodall's. Although one municipal site got a rating of 4W for recreation, all the highest ratings from Woodall's went to private sites.

2.2 Summary

➢ Alberta offers the camper 359 RV campgrounds representing 33,122 RV campsites across the province.

➢ Overall, Alberta's RV campgrounds offer a great variety of services, from fully-serviced, Woodall's rated urban RV campgrounds to rustic RV campgrounds with fewer services and amenities.

➢ Private operators account for a very significant share of total RV campground market. More importantly, these operators are the major operators providing the full hookup and pull through services preferred by a good portion of the market.

➢ National Parks and Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas do not specifically focus on services for the RV camper, although their sites are used by RV owners (72% were RV in a 1999 survey of a selected sample of PPRA sites).

➢ The sources of RV campground information are disparate. A consistent, single source of information, including rated RV campgrounds, should be maintained. RV campgrounds could be classed as a subset of all campgrounds in the province.

3.0 TRENDS AFFECTING RV CAMPING IN ALBERTA

3.1 Introduction

The major societal trends will affect the RV camping markets in the coming decade. This section addresses some of the overall trends as determined from the literature and corroborated through interviews with RV manufacturers, Camping Associations, RV campground operators, and other respondents.

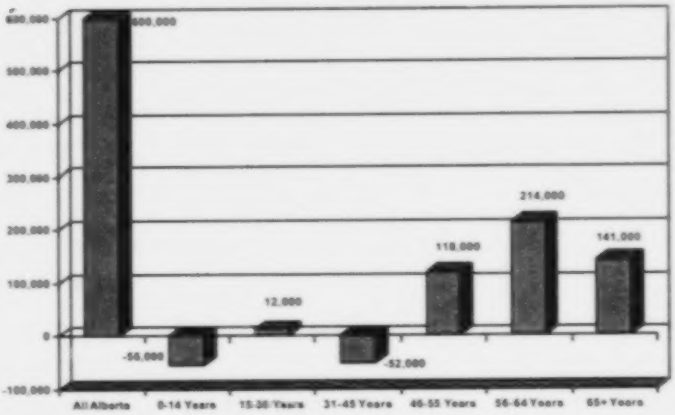
3.2 Demographic Trends

- The primary trend impacting and anticipated to impact RV campground demand and use in North America is the aging of the North American population. The trend is impacting RV purchases and ownership today, and will impact purchases, type of use, demand for RV campgrounds and the RV lifestyle in a major way in the next twenty years.
- Demographic trends in Alberta will impact the nature and mix of our population:
    - Fertility rates are below replacement, the population is aging, and the economy is short of labour. This suggest that in-migration of younger workers will be a significant trend in the future.
    - According to Statistics Canada, Alberta's population will increase by 600,000 people, to 3.42 million people by 2016. This is according to the "medium" scenario of that agency.
    - The 35 – 44 year old cohort of population in Alberta is now the largest cohort of the population. By 2016 it will be the smallest cohort in percentage terms.
    - The 403,000 Albertans in the 45 – 54 category in 2000, will increase to 522,100 by 2011 (30% growth) before it drops back to just over 490,000 in 2016. This is the highest spending cohort as well as the highest income cohort in Alberta, and one of the main groups that spend on recreational vehicles.
    - The 55-64 year old cohort numbered 233,600 in 2000. It will be 402,800 (72% growth) in 2011 and 471,300 (102% over 2000) in 2016. There will be 237,700 MORE people in this age category in Alberta in 2016 than there were in 2000.
    - An example of the possible impact of this demographic change is appropriate. If we assume that the 55-64 year old cohort continues to purchase at the Canadian average rate of 13% of households (GoRving Study, ibid.), and if we assume that the average 55-64 year old household is 2 persons, we can anticipate almost 15,450 **MORE** RV's owned by this cohort in 2016. Assuming a conservative 15

camping nights per year from this cohort, an ***additional*** 232,000 camping nights will be demanded annually.

- The 65 + cohort of population will go from the second smallest to the largest cohort in *absolute numbers* by 2016. There will be 493,000 Albertans in this cohort, an increase of 141,000 or 40% from the population of this group today.
- The first boomer turned 50 in 1997. The 50-55 cohort will grow immensely in the coming five to ten years, as the subsequent cohorts of boomers enter this age category.
- The first boomers will turn 60 in 2007, and a similar pattern of growth in this cohort will occur. By 2016, the first boomers will turn 69.

TABLE 10:
Absolute Growth in Alberta Population, Selected Age Cohorts 2001 vs. 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Alberta Population Projections

- By 2025 in North America there will be 38 million ***MORE*** people in the 55-74 age category than there were in 1999.
- Thus, even if one assumes a decreasing propensity to purchase recreational vehicles, the industry will still be expected to grow significantly during this period.

3.3 Economic Trends

While recent economic trends in North America have been negative, with economic, corporate and stock market declines being reported in the press on a regular basis, the next decade appears to be rather bright for Alberta.

The economic potential and future of Alberta is important because the largest proportion of RV campers in Alberta are Albertans. North American economic trends are important for RV camping because RV purchases represent expenditures from discretionary income. As such they are very dependent on consumer confidence, the state of the economy, and interest rates.

Key relevant features of the Alberta and North American economies in the coming decade are outlined here:

3.3.1 North America

- The Canadian economy is expected to remain stable and growing in the coming decade.
- The Canadian economy will continue to depend on U.S. economic factors, and Canada will remain a "good buy" for tourism due to a currency that continues to be weak.
- North American baby boomers will inherit trillions of dollars in the coming years. Some of this income will be invested in RV lifestyles.
- Recent stock market losses in the trillions of dollars may translate in the short run into decreases in RV purchasing by some markets. This situation is expected to abate in the medium term, 3-5 years.

3.3.2 Alberta

- Alberta continues to lead the country in economic performance. Although its growth rate has been second to Newfoundland recently, Alberta's growth outpaces other provinces.
- Some $62 billion in major projects have been announced in Alberta, with a further $15 billion in projects in the NWT. These projects, in oil and gas, forestry, and other sectors, ensure growth of the Alberta economy for the coming decade at least.
- These projects will create significant economic spin-off, employment growth, population growth, and increasing demand for leisure and recreation activities.
- Alberta will have a significant labour shortage issue, will need to address labour in-migration, and will see housing and population growth to service the impacts of these major projects over the next decade.
- Disposable income of Albertans is one of the highest in the country. This is expected to continue in the future.

3.3.3 Mitigating Considerations

- Stock Market Correction – The correction experienced since March, 1999 in the stock market has taken trillions of dollars of value from investors. This will impact their perception of wealth, and can be expected to negatively impact RV sales in the short term.
- Economic Correction – The economic downturn in the USA will impact disposable income of consumers. This will have a downward impact on RV sales. It is expected to impact the smaller unit sales more than large unit sales.

- Fuel Costs – Should oil prices increase to $40 - $50 U.S. a barrel due to increasing instability in the Middle East region, RV sales will clearly be impacted negatively.
- In some circles of manufacturers and operators, increasing fuel prices are not thought to have a major impact on RV ownership, for even on a long trip, increases amount to only $500 or so. This is minor relative to the total trip cost.
- Increasing fuel costs, it is anticipated, will create more opportunities for local Destination RV campgrounds as more people travel closer to home in their RVs and leave them as "cottages" in campgrounds on a seasonal basis.

3.4 Recreation Trends

- Among the fastest growing recreation activities in America are bird watching, hiking, backpacking, camping in primitive areas, walking, sightseeing, and camping in developed areas. These trends suggest an American market that will increasingly seek outdoor activities in their leisure time. Some of these people will use a RV so they can be close to the outdoors while remaining comfortable (1999 Congress on Recreation and Resource Capacity).
- Among the top leisure activities in Canada are sightseeing, photography, camping, hiking/backpacking, climbing, cycling and relaxing. These are all outdoor activities that lend themselves to the RV lifestyle.
- Albertans list walking for pleasure, camping, bicycling, hiking, and fishing as favourite leisure time activities. All markets list golf as a growing activity (Alberta Recreation Survey, 1996, 2000).
- Camping is an important leisure activity for Albertans. According to the Alberta Recreation Survey, overnight camping ranked 9th as a recreational activity in 1996, with 46.3% of households and 40.7% of respondents participating. In the 2000 survey camping ranked 10th, but households participating had increased to 47.6% while respondents participating grew to 42.6%.
- The aging baby boom will mean growing domestic and international travel. The RV camping lifestyle will appeal to many.
- Increasing congestion in National Parks and other protected area settings will offer opportunities for private initiatives.
- The focus on ecological integrity in our parks systems may increase the demand for accommodation outside protected areas. This may increase demand for high quality RV campgrounds outside but near these parks.

- Some national parks are perceived to be discouraging RVs in parks by providing limited services for them. For example, RV stays in America's national parks are declining, down 16% from their peak in 1987. This may be attributable to the growing incompatibility between the vehicles and campgrounds designed in national parks (Hueffel, John, "Where RV's Dare Not Go" in American Demographics, 1996).

- In Alberta, much of our provincial parks system was designed and constructed before the major technological changes in the RV created the need for change in campgrounds. As a result, they do not offer the level of basic services found in private campgrounds.

- Recreation camping trends in Alberta point toward increased private ownership and operation of RV campgrounds, and increased control and sensitivity regarding access to our parks and protected areas. RV campgrounds, privately owned, outside our park boundaries may be an appropriate solution in some areas.

3.5 RV Market-Related Trends

3.5.1 Demand-Side Trends

- Approximately 9 million RVs are on the road in America, and 30 million people indicate they are "enthusiasts". One in 10 U.S. vehicle-owning households have a RV while American ownership is approximately 10% of households, over 13% of Canadian households own a RV today. The percentage of households owning a RV increases with age of the household (Humphreys "2001 Outlook on the RV Market; GoRving Canada Usage and Attitude Study, 1999).

- Growth in RV product sales in America is illustrated in the table below:

TABLE 11:
U.S. PRODUCT SALE TRENDS, 1978 - 1999

Year	*Recreational Vehicle*	*Conversion Vehicles*	*TOTAL*
1978	390,000	136,000	526,000
1980	107,200	71,300	178,500
1985	187,000	165,000	352,000
1990	173,100	174,200	347,300
1995	247,000	228,200	495,200
1998	293,000	148,600	441,600
1999	321,200	152,600	473,800

Source: Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, Shipments Data

- The table illustrates the dramatic crash in RV sales following the hyperinflation and then the recession of 1980/81. Interest rates soared during this period, a fuel "crisis" threatened America, with fuel costs project to grow to $70 a barrel, and inflation ate away at earnings and discretionary income. The result was a 73% drop in RV sales and a 66% drop in camper van sales over a two-year period! It has taken over 20 years for the sales volume to recover from the crash of 1980!

- Product sales data shows the growth of camper vans until 1990 when they matched sales of other RVs. Following this time RV sales grew to come close to the volumes experienced in the late 1970s.

➢ Mr. David Humphreys, President of the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, summarized the present status and future prospects for the RV sector at the 2000 Tourism Outlook Conference in the USA:

- RV ownership has increased in recent years, and the baby boom aging is projected to increase ownership even more in the coming decade.

- 45% of current owners are 35-54 years old. They outnumber the over 55 "empty nester" (40%) that made up the classic RV owner in past years.

- The "typical" American RV owner in 1997 was 48 years of age and had a $47,000 income and was married.

- RV ownership increases about 3% for each 10-year cohort. The 55-64 year old cohort has a 16.4% ownership rate in RVs. The "boomer trend" will increase the 45-54 year old cohort by 32% or 6.1 million Americans and the 55-64 year old cohort by 63% or 8 million Americans between 1997 and 2010. This augers well for increased RV sales.

- Current owners who will purchase again use their RVs 3 times as much as those who do not repurchase, averaging 32 days per year. Some 66% plan to purchase another RV.

- U.S. RV ownership is expected to grow by 21% to 2010, putting 1.1 million additional RV units on the road and in the RV campgrounds during that period. At an average usage level of 15 days per year, this implies an increased demand for 16.5 million ***additional*** RV camping nights in North America by 2010.

➢ Canadian patterns in RV ownership will not differ significantly from those of the U.S.

3.5.2 Supply-Side Trends

- Improved materials, frame structures, and "wide body" construction have increased the size and amenities in RVs. RV payloads have increased at the same time.

- Larger, more powerful gas motors, and increasing size and torque in diesel motors have also allowed the RV to increase in size, weight, and payload.

- Increasing towing capacities in the vehicle market have contributed to the feasibility of larger towable RV units. This is particularly evident in the large fifth wheel category, where some of these units that were originally anticipated to be installed permanently in RV campgrounds are actually being used as towable leisure units.

- The increased capacities of RVs have permitted larger holding tanks, and better power systems allow the RV to remain "independent" of services for a longer period of time.

- Many units today offer the same full amenities as a house might have – refrigerator, stove, microwave, walk-in shower, central vacuum, washer/dryer, home entertainment center, and other amenities. These amenities increase the demand on RV campgrounds, although they also permit independence for the RV enthusiast.

- The increasing use of "slide-outs" is related to this trend toward weight reduction and GVW capacity increases, as well as to the perfection of the slide-out technology. Today units regularly have two and three slide-outs, and the "rear slide" technology is contributing to longer vehicles but with a shorter towing footprint.

- Slide technology has entered the smaller unit and folding trailer segments, creating affordable units that are large enough for a family yet can be towed by an SUV. This has contributed to the increase in sales of these towables.

- Recent trends in product sales point in two directions:

    - Increasing sales of smaller RV units, towables and folding trailers; and

    - Increasing sales of very large luxury units. In very recent months, sales people have found a modulation in this trend, with purchasers opting for mid-size (32 foot) RVs with sliders.

- Boomers are increasingly purchasing lightweight towables that can be towed by the proliferation of SUVs being purchased by that group.

- Canadian RV trends track those of the U.S., although data on sales will not be released in Canada:

    - More "family" units are selling – folding trailers, small towable;

  - Large towables, fifth wheels are selling as luxury units, often for long term placement;
  - In motorhomes there is a shift away from the large class A driveable which accounted for 35% of the market in the past. Now these units are 12% of the Canadian market, with fifth wheels making up the difference; and
  - Class C motorhome (20 ft – 31 ft units on a truck chassis) sales are growing while Class B motorhome (camper vans) sales are declining (see Appendix 2 for definitions of RV types).

- In all markets the significant product change in the past few years is the proliferation of "sliders" on all units. These sliders, now often three per vehicle, have caused a widening of the footprint of a RV by up to 6 feet or so. Thus with the awning on one side and a slider on the other, a RV can be more that 22 feet wide. This has proved challenging for some campgrounds.

- The length of the total RV package has increased significantly as well. A large RV with a car trailer attached can approach 70 feet today. In some jurisdictions, including Alberta, a fifth wheel RV can also tow a boat, creating an "articulated" vehicle of seventy feet or so.

- According to some respondents, the future of RV sales depends on the "boomers" satisfaction with the RV campground. Boomers are used to high levels of service, first class hotels, and all amenities. They are also used to paying for these services. Research has shown that satisfaction with the RV campground diminishes as income of respondent increases. If the boomers experience low satisfaction with the RV campground product, they may leave the RV market.

3.5.3 Projected RV Spending Trends

In a report on the future of Canadian household spending, services demanded were profiled based on demographic trends and purchasing behaviour in the current year. Based on these projections, the following leisure activities were projected to grow by more than 30%.

TABLE 12:
FASTEST PROJECTED GROWTH IN CONSUMER SPENDING IN CANADA, 1996-2016

Rank	***Spending Category***	***Percent Growth 1996-2016***
#2	Expenses on Owned Vacation Homes	50.7%
#7	Golfing Memberships	40.3%
#10	Motels	36.4%
#11	Games of Chance	35.8%
#15	Rented Vacation Homes	34.5%
#16	Packaged Travel Tours	34.1%
#21	Sightseeing Tours and Excursions	32.4%
#23	**PURCHASE OF RECREATIONAL VEHICLES**	**32.0%**

Source: People Patterns Consulting, 1999

So a projected 32% increase in recreational vehicle purchases by Canadians is anticipated by this report. Demand for RV campsites, RV storage, repair, maintenance, accessories, social organizations and education and training are anticipated to increase with the increase in RV ownership.

➢ The market share of purchased RVs by Canadian age cohorts is also expected to change:

- The 15-34 cohort purchases will *decrease* over the period by 4.5%, to $449 million in 2011 and $456 million in 2016 from an estimated $478 million in 1996;
- The 35-54 cohort will grow in dollars spent from $1.24 billion in 1996 to $1.42 billion in 2016, a real growth of 14.9% over the period. Purchasing will peak in 2011 at and estimated $2.45 billion for this group; and
- The 55 plus cohort's RV purchases will increase by 85.3% during the period, from $721 million in 1996 to an estimated $1.34 billion in 2016. The estimate for 2011 is for $1.18 billion in RV expenditures.

3.6 Conclusions

All indicators appear to point toward a similar conclusion:

➢ Population and economic trend data suggest that RV ownership will increase significantly in the coming 15 years in Alberta, Canada, and North America. This is due primarily to effects related to the baby boom.

- RV units sizes are longer and wider. The unit offers more amenities and requires more power.
- The advent of "sliders" in RV units has increased the width of some units to the limit of campground site capacity.
- Recreation trend data suggests the market will continue to seek active, outdoor recreation in natural settings. This implies that the tourism product Alberta offers will continue to satisfy this market.
- Recent sales trend data shows "bimodal growth" – the larger, more luxurious towable units are selling strongly, and folding trailers and small towables are also selling well.
- The future of RV camping, according to some sources, will depend on the satisfaction with the RV campground experience by the very demanding and well traveled "boomer" generation.
- The RV owner in the future will be, on average, older. This owner may seek more permanent locations, higher quality RV resorts, and more services and amenities within the RV campground, and high quality sites and services.

Mitigating economic factors may include increasing fuel costs, an economic correction in North America, and declining stock markets. These factors are not expected to significantly alter the pattern anticipated. However, large increases in fuel cost will cause large declines in sales in the short run.

4.0 RV CAMPGROUND MARKETS: PROFILE, CHARACTERISTICS, NEEDS

4.1 Introduction

Information on specific RV camping market segments is not readily available from research sources. While past research on consumer behaviour is helpful, and has been reviewed in this report, the material is dated. In fact, new American consumer research will be presented in 2001 to the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association in America. This consumer research should be followed closely by Albertans interested in RV trends and markets.

The existing camping market in Alberta is profiled in this chapter through a reanalysis of the Canadian Travel Survey data from 1999. While this gives excellent insight into the camping market overall, it does not differentiate between those camping in RVs and campers not in RVs. Indicator data based on surveys of a limited number of Alberta campgrounds suggests that some 72% of campers at these campgrounds are in RVs. (1999 Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Survey: Provincial Summary, Alberta Community Development). So while the RV camper may dominate the camping market as indicated by this small sample of provincial campgrounds, it does not represent the entire camping market.

We have assumed that the overall camping behaviours identified in this research reflect the behaviour of the RV camper, since they likely account for some 70% of the market. However, while this may be intuitively valid, it would be preferable to have research on the behaviours and needs, specifically, of the RV camping market.

A series of interviews were conducted with representatives of:

- RV Manufacturers;
- RV Association and Clubs;
- RV Rental Operators; and
- RV Campground Operators.

From these sources various research material was gathered and profiles of the RV camper were developed. Responses to specific questions are presented in this Chapter, while the interview guidelines are presented in Appendix 4.

The foremost point that all respondents offered is that the RV camping market is VERY disaggregated. While some of the key desirable characteristics of RV campgrounds are shared, there is a great variety in the demand for RV camping. Some people purchase a very high-end diesel pusher RV for $400,000 Canadian and plan primarily to use it where no serviced campgrounds can be found. They stop in gravel pits and at the roadside, using the RV as a fully self-contained hotel room.

Other people seek full services to their unit so that they can park it at a site and not have to move it for the duration of their visit. Finally, others seek the security, programs, services and amenities of a RV destination, so that they can relax while they let their children enjoy supervised programs on the secure site.

It should also be clear that these patterns are not fixed for a single family. These demands are *occasion-based demands*. That is to say, the same family that seeks a Destination RV campground on most occasions will seek the unserviced campground as a "getaway" spot for fishing in the fall.

Thus any segmentation effort should be assessed in the context of this highly varied marketplace.

With the above cautionary note in mind, the following market groupings resulted from the interview process.

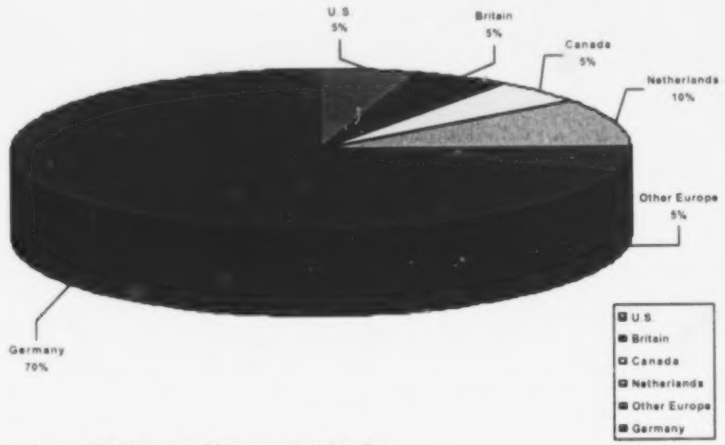
4.2 Market Segments

4.2.1 RV Renter/Adventurer

Key characteristics of Alberta's RV rental market:

- Market origin is primarily Germany, with a weighted average of 70% of rentals.
- Netherlands market accounts for approximately 10%, although estimates varied from 10% to 15%.
- British market is strong for some operations, but averages about 5% of market.
- Canadians account for less than 5% of market.
- U.S. customers account for less than 5% of market.
- "Other markets" primarily originating in Europe with a small share of Australia/ New Zealand origins, account for 5% of the total.

TABLE 13:
Estimated Market Share of RV Rentals, By Origin



Source: WMC Research, RV Campground Data Base

The above information tracks only customers who pick up their units in Calgary, Vancouver or Whitehorse, the three major "stations" for the western fleet. It does not track Alberta visitors who rent their units in other provinces or the USA.

The western Canadian RV fleet numbers over 4,000 units, and may be closer to 4,500 units. At average utilization (80%) for the 145 day high summer period, the market represents over 500,000 camper nights for western Canada.

Key characteristics of these travellers, based on the interviews, were as follows:

- They are here to experience the great Canadian outdoor environment, clean air, wilderness and wildlife, and "adventure".
- The RV unit affords them independence while providing safe, comfortable accommodation. The mainstay of the RV fleet are campers, B class units and C class RVs from 20 feet to 24 feet in length. Very few larger C class and big A class units are rented, accounting for under 10% of units.
- First time visitors seek out RV campgrounds with services – usually provincial parks and National Parks. Repeat visitors seek more remote areas, and they are not concerned about campgrounds with full services. In fact, a portion of this market seeks campgrounds without services and off the "beaten track" precisely because they want to get away from congested areas.
- Not all segments are the same. U.S. and Canadian visitors tend to seek campgrounds with RV services, whether or not these are full hookups. They certainly look for electrical and water services.
- Feedback from operators suggested the following attitudes toward specific aspects of RV campgrounds:
    - They have higher demand for 30 amp service, water and sewer services.
    - They are interested in equipment rental where appropriate – bicycles, fishing gear, boat/canoe rental and other equipment.
    - They value well-located sites near attractions, good site design, treed sites and good landscaping, and appreciate a general store. They are confident and believe that Canadian RV campgrounds and facilities are safe and secure.
    - This market has very low demand for 50 amp power, telephone, cable, Internet, hookups.

- In terms of amenities, this market shows low demand for community centres, recreational programming, business rooms, playgrounds, swimming pools, marinas, recreational programming.
- When asked about "urban RV campgrounds" this group generally state that this is not why they come to Canada, so they get away from the cities as quickly as possible.
- With some prompting, they offered that urban-oriented RV campgrounds should have higher service levels and could offer ground transportation and other urban amenities.

This RV rental market is the *"RV Wilderness Adventurers"*. They are looking for basic services from their RV campground so that they can enjoy Alberta's Nature. They generally operate smaller units, do not require pull throughs, and are not concerned about service levels, provided pump outs and water sources are available. This segment would generally AVOID the destination RV campground and its higher level of services.

This market spends a good deal of time searching out their destination, primarily on the Internet. However, the market needs information about camping opportunities *off the beaten track*. They need to know about services in the region in which they are travelling, not necessarily just in the RV campgrounds. They would also value information on roads that are "safe" for their rented vehicles. "Branded" campgrounds for this market, are more likely provincial and national parks than they are privately operated RV campgrounds.

The ARCA focus group, reported later in this study, allowed that a very small percentage of their market comes in the form of RV rental customers, supporting the point that this market does not look for destination RV campgrounds or for branded sites. If any branding exists, it is our National Parks that offer a brand for these visitors.

Respondents thought the European market, and Germany in particular, might tail off in the next few years, due mainly to currency fluctuations. However, the long-term future for this market is predicted to be very strong.

4.2.2 The RV "Full Timer"

The RV "Full timer" is an experienced RV user, often pulling or driving a large unit in which they live much if not all of the time. They are older, retired people travelling as "adult-no kids" independent travellers. However, they often travel with friends in other units, and with their grandchildren for parts of their trips. These "nomads" look for regions and sites with the following characteristics:

- Full services – pull throughs, full hook up, telephone (modem), community centres, stores/services, nearby vehicle services, and other amenities.
- Landscaped, full amenity destination sites are of interest to them, particularly as they often seek a longer stay in a single location.
- They are usually members of several RV clubs, and they seek out affiliated campgrounds to obtain the lower rates available to club members.
- These campers, when out of their region, look for "Branded" sites (KOA, Good Sam, Coast to Coast etc.) where they know the amenities. They also carry the Woodall's guide, Travel Life or other club guides to determine which operators have the sites they are looking for.
- This market stays longer in most locations and are "exploring" the region, looking for "lots of things to see and do".
- They look for good site security as they choose their RV campgrounds.
- They have been characterized as those who "jump" from secure, branded RV campground to secure branded RV campground in North America, exploring the region from a safe base.

Alberta may not host a large number of these RV campers, but we simply do not know whether or not we do host them. Alberta has a low level of "club" affiliation in its campgrounds. If this segment travels from one club affiliated site to another, choosing their travel route by the location of these sites, then Alberta might be getting a lower share of market than it would otherwise obtain.

The Airstream "club" example may illustrate this point. The average age of the owners at the luxury end of the Airstream product line… both towable and motorhomes, has an average age of 69 years. They are well off, spend a good deal of time annually travelling in the RV, enjoy the company of other Airstream owners in a club setting, and move from one of the "Airstream approved" RV sites to another. There are 40 "approved" sites in America, offering the absolute highest service and amenities for this rarified market. There are no sites in Canada. Airstream does not own these RV campgrounds, but simply has an "affiliate" relationship with them.

This market is expected to grow very significantly over the next decade or more, as boomers retire and choose this nomadic lifestyle. Full timers will often be members of several clubs, and they are increasingly users of Internet services to stay in touch as they travel.

4.2.3 "The RV Destination Camper"

The RV destination camper looks for the full-service destination campground as a longer stay "cottage" site. Key characteristics:

- This is predominantly a "family" market, meaning one or more adults and children.
- They seek a "full service" RV campground. In addition to the water, sewer, electrical, cable, phone, and other services, these people seek:
  - Programming for children and for adults – a key determinant of success of the campground, these people seek children's fun and learning programs throughout the summer. Older campers look for learning experiences for adults.
  - Community centre becomes an important gathering and socializing venue for these people.
  - Water suitable for water contact activities – a lake, marina, pools, and hot tubs.
  - Long term lease capability. Some purchase sites where available. "Strata title" (condominium) sites are commonly available in British Columbia. While there are four or five such campgrounds in Alberta, many municipalities tend to be concerned that these sites will become permanent, full-time communities.
  - They value site security, primarily in relation to the safety of their children while away from parents but on the site.
  - These markets also value fixed roof accommodation on site as well as park units for rent, so that visiting friends and relatives can stay on site without staying in their unit.
  - These markets often pick a site and return over and over again to the same place. They store their units on site for the winter, and some don't move the unit for years. This is a "cottaging" alternative for these markets.

Alberta has some excellent Destination RV campgrounds located primarily in the Central Tourism Destination Region. These are an easy drive from Calgary or Edmonton, and they attract the weekender as well as the summer market. They are independently owned and operated, and are generally not "branded" with a flag such as Jellystone or KOA.

Outside of Alberta, some of the most successful sites for these markets are "branded" for families. The Jellystone Park example used later in the report is a prime example of such branding.

4.2.4 The "Club Traveller"

The "club" or "group" traveller connects with one or more clubs to travel in a group to a desirable destination. In summer, 2001 Edmonton will host a large group of Family Motor Coach Association campers from such a group. Approximately 1,500 units are anticipated in the City for this international FMCA event.

These trips are organized by the club, and all logistics are provided by the club for a fee. They often travel to relatively exotic places to attend major events, and on relatively long trips. Fees for the trip are also significant, although these are "inclusive tours", including tickets.

The market is almost entirely a "50 plus" market, with adults travelling without children. Sometimes grandchildren are along on these events.

A review of recent web material for Airstream, for instance, includes a trip to Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Alaska, the Daytona 500, and Quebec. Finally, a "once in a lifetime" trip to the UK can also be found on the site.

Caravan travellers are looking for a safe group of friends with whom to travel. The organizers are looking for destination offering a lot of interest to their members, and logistics that will allow them to park larger groups. They look for full service sites wherever possible, but when group size is large they are actually looking for event organization and staging from the destination area.

Club travel most often does not include large numbers of units. Twenty or thirty units traveling together is more the norm than the 200 to 2,000 units that are often characterized as a caravan. More often today the group size is limited, and when "booked up" the trip is cut off. Bookings for these trips is done on the Internet by members of the club.

Alberta does not appear to get a large share of this market, although data is simply not available. This market for group RV travel is anticipated to grow significantly as the baby boom generation ages.

4.2.5 "Independent RV Camper"

The itinerant, overnight RV camper was not profiled in the interview process in this research. It is fair to say that this market is as varied as the population, and forms the largest market segment of the RV market. This market, in terms of total volume, travels largely on the weekends, even during the high summer period. Mid-week volumes are characteristically 50% or more below weekend volumes at most campgrounds.

However, the same people who characteristically are "weekenders", will also be the "North American touring market" at a certain time and place. In Alberta, we receive some of the

"Alaska" market from the USA. These people are making a "once in a lifetime" touring trip to Alaska, and they are seeking "lots to see and do" as they make this long journey. The Alberta destination needs to offer them interesting things to do, culture, diversion, entertainment and learning as they pass through this region.

This "independent" RV market is travelling for a large variety of reasons – family reunions, baseball tournaments, a weekend at the lake, a cross-country tour, and myriad other reasons. They look for clean, well-located, campgrounds.

A profile of Alberta's domestic camping market following gives some insight into the variety and range of interests of the overall camping market. While it will predominantly reflect the Alberta resident "weekender" market, it also captures the other travellers in Alberta to some extent.

4.3 Profile of Campers in Alberta

4.3.1 Introduction

The recent report titled "Tourism in Alberta: A Summary of Visitor Numbers, Revenue and Characteristics – 1999" provides insight into the Alberta camping market. In 1999 visitors spent 40.3 million person-nights in Alberta, and 5.1 million person-nights of these were spent in camping/trailer parks. This report, based on the "harmonized" Canadian Travel Survey/ International Travel Survey for 1999, suggests the breakdown by origin is as follows:

TABLE 14:
CAMPING PERSON-NIGHTS SPENT BY VISITORS IN ALBERTA, 1999

	Person-Nights (Thousands)	*Percent*
Albertans	3,300	64%
Other Canadians	700	14%
U.S.	460	9%
Overseas	650	13%
TOTAL	**5,100**	**100%**

This estimate is our best, research-based estimate of campground visitation to Alberta.

The variation among Tourism Destination Regions is also documented in this 1999 study as follows:

TABLE 15:
ESTIMATED CAMPING VISITATION IN PERSON-NIGHTS TO ALBERTA'S TOURISM DESTINATION REGIONS, 1999

Region (TDR)	*Person Night (Thousands)*	*Percent*
Alberta's North	370	7.3%
Edmonton and Area	300	5.9%
Central Alberta	1,900	37.5%
Calgary and Area	330	6.5%
Alberta's South	690	13.6%
Alberta's Rockies	1,470	29.2%
TOTAL	**5,060**	**100%**

Data on Alberta Provincial Park Visitors (1999 Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Survey: Provincial Summary) indicates that for the provincial parks and recreation areas surveyed 97% of campers were Canadians, while only 3% were from international origins.

Of the Canadians, 89% were from Alberta, while 4% were from B.C., 2% from Saskatchewan, and the remaining 3% from other provinces and territories.

Parks Canada data may be a good indicator of the international RV camping market, by origin, to Alberta's major destination areas. The table following indicates visitors by origin for campgrounds in Banff and Jasper:

TABLE 16:
CAMPERS BY ORIGIN, FRONT COUNTY CAMPGROUNDS IN BANFF NATIONAL PARK, 2000 AND JASPER NATIONAL PARK 1998

Origin	*Banff (2000, %)*	*Jasper (1998, %)*
Canadian	54%	63%
Alberta	29%	41%
B.C.	10%	12%
Other	15%	10%
USA	23%	18%
Other – International	23%	19%

Clearly, international visitors and Canadians from outside Alberta are visiting our National Parks in higher proportion to their visitation to other parks in Alberta.

Research Resolutions and Consulting Ltd. was commissioned to conduct a specific analysis of travel databases to assess the camping market in Alberta. The available data covers Canadian campers in Alberta but does not include non-Canadian visitors who camp in Alberta.

In the sections following the actual report of Research Resolutions is reproduced as it was submitted. The purpose of the work is to provide a "snapshot" of camping behaviour in Alberta by Canadians to gain some insight into characteristics of this market.

This analysis of Canadians who spent nights in campgrounds within Alberta uses the 1999 Canadian Travel Survey (Statistics Canada). This analysis is based on **household** visitor units rather than **person** visitor units since campsites and RV facilities are rented on a party basis. Because RV owners cannot be differentiated from non-RV campers within the domestic data files, the units of analysis are "camping households" and "household camping nights".

Tabulations were prepared by Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd. and are provided under separate cover. These data are summarized in the sections following.

4.3.2 Place of Origin – Canadian Household Campers in Alberta

Close to five million Canadian households spent at least one night in Alberta on a trip during 1999. Of these, more than one-tenth spent at least one night in the province's campgrounds or RV facilities (539,000).[1]

While most households travelling on overnight trips in Alberta are residents of the province (75%), those that camp in the province are more likely to be Albertans (86%) than are those who spend no nights at campsites or RV campgrounds (74%).

Alberta's camping and RV facilities draw heavily on the province's two major urban areas for their markets – Calgary CMA (22%) and Edmonton CMA (30%).

Alberta's neighboring provinces account for most camping trips taken by Canadians who live outside Alberta. Just over 30,000 British Columbia households cross the Alberta border and spend camping nights in the province and slightly fewer Saskatchewan households do so (24,000).

Campgrounds in Alberta have virtually no lure for Quebecers, almost none for Atlantic Canadians but draw modest numbers of households from Ontario (11,000) and Manitoba (9,000).

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[1] *Household visits by Canadians on overnight trips with a main purpose other than business.*

4.3.3 Camping Nights

The one-half million Canadian households that camped in Alberta in 1999 spent over 1.7 million camping nights in the province. Close to half of these household nights were spent in the Central travel region (785,000), and almost one-fifth were spent in Alberta's Rockies (319,000). Alberta South attracted over one-quarter million camping nights over the year (258,000), while the North (135,000) and Calgary Area (117,000) each attracted about half this number. The Edmonton Area attracted one-twentieth of the province's domestic camping nights (80,000).

In light of the fact that most **households** that went camping in Alberta are residents of the province, it is not surprising that over 8-in-10 domestic camping **nights** in the province were spent by Alberta residents.

The Rockies Tourism Destination Region drew most of the its campers from Edmonton CMA (100,000) and Calgary CMA (74,000). Because of the small size of the permanent population within the Rockies, this region tends to attract few of its own residents as campers. In contrast, camping and RV facilities in several other Alberta travel regions rely heavily on the local population as a source of visitors. One-third of Heartland's camping nights are taken by the region's residents; one-fifth of Alberta South's camping nights are intra-regional, and one-quarter of the camping nights in Alberta's North are a function of regional residents seeking camping experiences in their own region.

Out-of-province campers seek camping and RV experiences across Alberta's tourism regions. For example, camping nights by B.C. residents are almost equally likely to be spent in Alberta's Rockies (28,000), Heartland (33,000) and the Edmonton Area (35,000). Nights in Alberta campgrounds by Saskatchewan residents are somewhat more concentrated in the Rockies (24,000) and Heartland (22,000) than is the case among their B.C. counterparts. Nonetheless, these Saskatchewan campers also go to Alberta's South (13,000) and North (8,000) and near the two major urban centres (Edmonton and Calgary, 6,000 each).

Ontario visitors who camp in Alberta spend more nights in the Edmonton (23,000) and Calgary (24,000) regions than they do in Alberta's Rockies (14,000), perhaps suggesting that they favour camping facilities that are *near* but not *within* the national parks.

TABLE 17:
LOCATION OF CAMPING NIGHTS SPENT IN ALBERTA BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE
CAMPING NIGHTS SPENT IN ... ALBERTA

Place of Residence	*Total*	*Calgary & Area*	*Edmonton & Area*	*South*	*Central*	*North*	*Rockies*
Canada	1,712,000	117,000	80,000	258,000	785,000	135,000	319,000
Alberta	1,386,000	61,000	11,000	222,000	710,000	115,000	250,000
Rockies	10,000	*	*	5,000	3,000	*	1,000
Central	373,000	9,000	4,000	18,000	259,000	35,000	38,000
South	89,000	9,000	*	57,000	16,000	*	7,000
North	67,000	4,000	1,000	*	23,000	33,000	5,000
Edmonton & Area	471,000	16,000	3,000	44,000	267,000	34,000	100,000
Calgary & Area	377,000	22,000	3,000	98,000	143,000	12,000	99,000
B.C.	132,000	17,000	35,000	9,000	33,000	11,000	28,000
Saskatchewan	80,000	6,000	6,000	13,000	22,000	8,000	24,000
Manitoba	44,000	9,000	5,000	11,000	16,000	*	2,000
Ontario	69,000	24,000	23,000	3,000	5,000	1,000	14,000

*Source: Special CTS 1999 Tabulations, pages 2-1/2. *Less than 0.5%.*

Length and Timing of the Camping Trip

On average, a trip in Alberta that includes any nights spent camping lasts 3.5 nights, with almost all of these nights spent in campsites or RV campgrounds (3.2 nights). Alberta households that camp are on shorter trips (3.1 nights in total) and therefore spend fewer nights camping (3.0) than do households that come from outside the province (5.9 nights in total and 4.3 nights camping).[2]

Non-resident households on camping trips in Alberta are more likely than are their Alberta counterparts to spend at least some of their nights in Alberta at the homes of friends or relatives (18%) or to rely on hotels (9%) or motels (7%) in the province. In contrast, almost all Alberta households who are on camping trips in the province rely on camping facilities exclusively for their accommodation.[3]

The four warm weather months – June through September – account for almost 9-in-10 camping nights spent in the province by domestic households. The highest concentration is in August (35%) followed by July (27%). About 1-in-7 domestic camping nights in the province take place in June (14%) and the same proportion occurs in September (13%).[4]

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[2] *See Data Tables 3-1; 7-1 for more detail.*

[3] *See Data Table 10-1 for more detail.*

[4] *See Data Table 5-1 for more detail.*

4.3.4 Activities on the Camping Trip

Canadian households that camp in Alberta have a different activity profile than households that select other forms of accommodation while travelling in the province on a non-business trip. Generally, camping households are much more likely to engage in a variety of non-winter outdoor activities, to sightsee, to spend time in national or provincial parks and at heritage sites but are less likely to shop or visit with friends and relatives than are those that do not camp in Alberta.

TABLE 18:
ACTIVITIES ON NON-BUSINESS OVERNIGHT HOUSEHOLD TRIPS IN ALBERTA

	Total Alberta	*Non-Campers*	*Campers*
	4,931,000	4,392,000	539,000
	%	%	%
Visit Friends Or Relatives	77	81	46
Shopping	35	36	25
Sightseeing	26	23	54
Bar, Nightclub Or Casino	13	14	4
Visit A National Or Provincial Park	12	9	33
Attend Sports Event	8	8	9
Visit An Historic Site	5	4	15
Attend A Festival, Fair Or Exhibition	5	5	6
Visit A Museum Or Art Gallery	5	5	10
Attend A Cultural Event	4	4	4
Visit A Theme or Amusement Park	4	4	5
Visit a Zoo, Aquarium, Botanical Garden	3	3	2
Took A Cruise Or Boat Trip	1	1	4
Participate In Sports /Outdoor Activity	35	30	77
Walking Or Hiking	16	12	48
Other Sports Or Outdoor Activities	11	10	15
Swimming	6	4	22
Other Water-Based Activities	4	3	11
Fishing	4	2	18
Golfing	4	4	8
Winter Sports (skiing, snowmobiling)	4	5	*
Cycling	3	2	9
Bird Or Wildlife Viewing	2	1	7
Hunting	1	*	4

*Source: Special CTS 1999 Tabulations, pages 8-1/3. *Less than 0.5%.*

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Golfing	4	4	8
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Cycling	3	2	9
Bird Or Wildlife Viewing	2	1	7
Hunting	1	*	4

*Source: Special CTS 1999 Tabulations, pages 8-1/3. *Less than 0.5%.*

Even though it is less popular than among non-campers (81%), visiting with friends and relatives is a part of the activity mix on a camping trip for about half of all households that camp in the province over a year (46%). Not surprisingly, many campers visit provincial or national parks (33%) and/or engage in an outdoor activity while on their trip (77%).

Walking and hiking is the most popular outdoor activity among campers in the province (48%), followed by swimming (22%) and fishing (18%). While not widely popular, golf is a more common activity among campers (8%) than it is among non-campers in Alberta (4%). Since so little camping is done in the winter, it is not surprising that winter sports and outdoor activities are less common among campers (less than 0.5%) than is the case among non-campers (6%).

4.3.5 Who are Alberta's Domestic Campers?

On average, two people from the same household take camping trips in Alberta. This household party size does not necessarily reflect the "camping party size" since members of one household may camp with friends or relatives that live in different households. Close to 7 in 10 camping households include no children (under age 15 years). Thirty percent of camping households included children under 15 years of age.

Still compared to non-campers in the province (17%), camping household (29%) are more likely to include children, suggesting that camping is often a family activity.

Campers are somewhat less likely to be at the youngest or oldest ends of the age spectrum than are non-campers in the province.[5] Specifically, 1-in-4 non-campers are between the ages of 15 and 24 years but only 1-in-5 campers fall into this young age group. At the older end of the age spectrum, about twice as many non-campers are 70 years of age or over (7%) as is the case among campers (3%). Between these poles, campers and non-campers generally resemble one another in terms of age.

More men are camping (57%) than are women (43%) whereas the reverse pattern holds for non-campers in Alberta (44% men; 56% women).

Campers – like all non-business travellers in Alberta – tend to represent low to middle income households. More than half of the camping households have annual incomes under $60,000 (53%). At the same time, more camping households fall into the high-income group ($80,000 or more, 21%) than is the case among non-campers (15%).

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[5] *Age and gender are those of the respondent in the household (randomly selected individual 15 years of age or over). See Data Tables 12, 13 for more detail.*

4.3.6 Conclusion

This research underlines the fact that in terms of volume, RV camping by the domestic market is predominantly an activity of Alberta residents camping in Alberta. Families are drawn from our cities, primarily on summer weekends, to spend time close to nature and to recreation opportunities in Alberta's outdoors.

However, these same campgrounds provide an important service to non-Albertan visitors from Canada, the USA, and overseas when they travel to the province. A profile, similar to that for domestic campers, would be desirable for the international RV camping visitor to Alberta.

A good deal of additional work could be done with a variety of data bases to gain better insight into behaviour and characteristics of campers in Alberta. In particular, the Tourism Attitude and Motivation Study (TAMS) database could be assessed to gain further insight. Alberta would have to purchase this work from the national study authors.

4.4 Profile of Canadian RV Owners

The recent research of GoRVing Canada provides insight on RV ownership and owner characteristics. Entitled "*GoRVing Canada Usage and Attitude Study*", this 1999 report summarizes a survey of more than 2,200 RV owners and "non-owners" in Canada which helps provide insight into the satisfaction levels with the RV camping experience. This regionally significant study asked important questions about the RV campground, usage and satisfaction by RV owners. Overview of the findings follows:

4.4.1 Psychographics

- RV owners demonstrate similar psychographics to non-owners relative to travel attitudes. Basically they want to visit places in Canada, experience life, enjoy the moment, get out in nature and relax in a secure setting. The only significant difference worth noting between owners and non-owners is that RV owners seemed to feel that they were "living life to the fullest" slightly more than non-owners.

4.4.2 RV Club Memberships

- Only 12 % of RV owners belonged to RV Clubs. Some 25% of motorized and fifth wheel owners belonged to clubs, while less than 10% of travel trailer and folding RV owners belonged.
- The conclusion of the study is that there is a significant opportunity to increase RV club membership in Canada.

4.4.3 RV Camping Behaviour

- RV owners were much more likely to use private campgrounds than those Canadians who did not own RVs. About 70% vs. 39-55% for non-owners.
- RV owners are also heavier users of private campgrounds – an average 17.1 nights vs. only 1.0-2.3 nights for non-owners.
- The most important reasons for using national or provincial parks were to "Enjoy nature" (45%) or because they were "Well run, clean"(44%), in a "Convenient location"(39%), or "Enjoyed previous visit" (36%).
- The most important reason for using a private campground was "Convenient location" (42%), and "En Route for us" (37%), Well run/clean"(30%), and "enjoyed previous visit"(30%).
- The conclusion of the study is that private campgrounds cannot compete with the public sector for those RV owners who seek to "enjoy nature", as the public sector simply has a locational advantage. However, the private sector could provide programs or services not found in public parks.

4.5 Campground Demand Research Findings

Separate telephone surveys were conducted with small samples of representatives from the following groups:

- RV Manufacturers;
- RV Associations and Clubs;
- RV Rental Operators; and
- RV Campground Operators.

In addition to these surveys, a focus group session was held with representatives of Alberta Resort and Campground Association in February, 2001.

Each of these respondents was asked how trends they perceived in markets and products will impact RV campgrounds. The results are summarized in this section, while the questionnaires are included in Appendix 4.

4.5.1 Product Trends Impacting RV Campground Design

Respondents were asked whether there were recent product trends that were impacting RV campgrounds. The key RV product trends agreed by all respondents included the following:

- RV units are getting longer. Unit lengths, including a car-hauling trailer, approach 70-75 feet. These units require long, level, pull-through sites.
- RV units are getting wider. Triple slide-outs are common (three separate slide-out units in one RV), and with the awning these units can occupy about 24 feet in width. They require wider sites than are found at many RV campgrounds.
- More power is needed for the RV unit. While 30 amp power is commonly required, larger units need 50 amp power.
- Cable/modem/satellite services were considered to be important in RV campground design, although not specifically due to changes in the RV product itself.
- Other product trends – engine size, total weight type of unit, and towing requirements were not considered to be important factors in RV campground design.

4.5.2 Market Trends: Impacts on RV Campground Design

Respondents were asked if recent market trends were impacting RV campground design.

- Baby boomers are healthy, have more disposable income, and are active when they travel. They are creating a surge in RV sales and increasing demand for quality in the RV campground. Many boomers are traveling with families. Many have high disposable income and are purchasing luxury units. Others look for affordable recreation for their family through the RV purchase.
- The retirement age population will increase in coming years, and the RV camping market will increase significantly. These are active, outdoor people looking for experiences in a natural setting.
- The low Canadian dollar is attractive to international visitors while keeping more Canadians in Canada.
- High fuel prices may increase travel closer to home. However, for the large unit purchasers and the long-haul travelers fuel cost is not a major issue.

The impacts of these market trends on RV campground design can be summarized as follows:

- Increasingly the market will seek out destination RV campgrounds – well located, high quality RV campgrounds with good amenities, rental services, security, spacious level sites with adequate power, and other value-added services (golf, pool, community centre, retail).
- A variety of accommodation types will be commonly offered – RV sites, RV rental, cabins, and rental tent sites.

- For profit margins to remain the same, RV campgrounds will need to attract higher income demographics who will be willing to pay for the services that they expect. A variety of high-quality services and amenities will be demanded; "people don't mind paying a little extra for good service".

- "The camping experience is changing into a larger, resort-style experience rather than just "camping".

4.5.3 The Importance of Brand

Respondents to these surveys had different views about the importance of "brand" in a RV campground to the RV traveler.

What was meant by "Brand" included franchise RV campgrounds – like KOA or Jellystone franchises. However, the meaning was purposely left open so that "Provincial Parks" or specific types of campgrounds could be included in the response.

The ARCA focus group respondents felt that "brand" was not important, at least in the sense of the nationally recognized, franchised brand.

Even "branding" though recognition by Woodall's, Trailer Life, or Good Sam was considered a minor asset, as few (5-10%) of the ARCA customers come because of the brand. Some of the relevant comments of the ARCA focus group participants included:

- A "brand" for an individual campsite is not as important as getting the "ARCA" logo into the minds of people (stickers like CAA approved, etc). "Marketing "ARCA" as a brand will increase the public's recognition of our standards. "

- People already seek out "Provincial" and "National" parks, specifically. These are the "Brands" in our region.

  - The most common brand issue is the people who choose between Provincial (or state) parks and private RV campgrounds. If a camper is a common user of government park, then they will always look for National or Provincial parks. Users of private RV campgrounds, will tend to stay at private RV campgrounds, they are two different markets".

  - "I received business just because I am a Provincial Park. People expect a certain standard from a Provincial Park, even a certain price. I think brand is somewhat important.

- Each individual campsite can distinguish itself as its own "brand". Independent campground operators create their own brand among a set of customers.

Despite the view that Alberta was already "branded" with Provincial/National parks and independent operators, some respondents allowed that branding may have some relevance to Alberta.

- "People look for brand names in hotels and restaurants however, I am not sure how important a "brand" is to the camping experience."
- "If camping trends follow retail trends, then it is very important. People tend to flock to brand name stores & services because it takes the surprise out of the experience. Campgrounds are seen as family/independently run and that is currently acceptable, however, I see that people would probably go to branded campgrounds given enough exposure. "

RV Association respondents differed significantly. They volunteered that people look for the "brand" as an assurance of a known level of quality. They also look for "branded" sites (FMCA, Good Sam, Coast to Coast) in order to get discounted rates for RV camping. Some of their comments:

- Brand is not big in Canada; people are looking for "value for dollar". In the USA, where security is more important, brands are more successful.
- Brands (such as KOA) are a little too expensive for extended stays. However, "these RV campgrounds are good to stay at while you are travelling because you know what you are going to get."
- For overnight or weekends, brands like KOA are good, but not cheap.
- A campground needs to be listed in a directory and needs a good rating in "Trailer Life" or "Woodall's". These are important guides (valuable reference) for rules of the road in other places and tourist information.
- Many RV campers, and particularly "full timers" belong to RV clubs. In addition to the camaraderie, clubs offer group purchasing advantages, ratings of RV campgrounds, and camping discounts. Some clubs, (Coast to Coast, Passport, Happy Campers, Good Sam, FMCA, and others) have camping rates discounted as much as 70% from regular rates.

Not all RV manufactures were able to comment on "brand". However, they commented that their markets were looking for security, quality and services in the RV campground, and were willing to pay for quality.

In particular, one respondent commented on the need for Airstream to identify a number of RV campgrounds (40) in America that were "suitable" for this level of RV owner. The major categories "security" and "quality" are used to rate these RV campgrounds.

RV rental operators agreed with the ARCA focus group people that Alberta already had "branded" National and Provincial parks. These RV travelers seek out such parks because they are located near the regions the visitor wishes to see.

4.5.4 Keys to a Successful RV Campground

Respondents were asked about the keys to success in a RV campground operation. The areas of agreement among all respondents were as follows:

- Good location relative to market. Whether proximity to mountains, to lakes, or to urban malls, the RV campground must be located in areas that attract RV travelers. Golf courses, natural areas, trails, local communities/attractions, and events were all identified as elements of "good location" for the RV campground.
- Quality service provided at a fair price:
    - Clean, quality community washroom/shower areas;
    - 30 amp power, water, sewer/pumpout, and propane available nearby;
    - Level, wide sites with well planned access to hookups; "wide, private sites" are premium;
    - Pull through sites for large units; and
    - Telephone (modem) and cable were also important services.
- Programming – respondents agreed that programs for visitors were critical to market success. Programs for children, adult education/interpretation programs, entertainment and educational programs for youth and outdoor activity/fitness programs were identified as possible components. These are "value added" services that also earn a profit in most sites. Association respondents were less focused on the "on site" need for such services than were other respondents. Among components of the RV campground NOT considered to be important were:
    - Business meeting rooms; and
    - Fitness centre.

Beyond these core components, respondents offered a diversity of views.

RV rental respondents suggested that these travelers sought quality campgrounds at or near natural areas. This usually means National or Provincial parks. They are not concerned about fewer services, as they have rented their RV units to provide them independence of urban services yet in a comfortable, secure recreational vehicle. RV rental respondents would AVOID the type of "full service" RV campgrounds described by other respondents.

Association, ARCA, and Manufacturer respondents identified other desirable aspects of successful RV campgrounds:

- Paved roads to reduce dust.
- Community services – community centre, retail services, pools, hot tubs, nearby fuel and vehicle services.
- Personal value-added services – bicycle rental, scooters, boat rental, fishing gear rental, and other equipment rentals as dictated by the location.
- A "personality" – "service beyond the expected", a campground "personality", a "family orientation" were identified as being important. Regardless of size or branding, respondents felt that the owners/operators of RV campgrounds added an important and "special" aspect to the product.

ARCA respondents placed some emphasis on the business aspect of the successful RV campground. Campground operators of "exemplary practices" examples agree with their key points:

- A diversity of income centres "business units" is the key to operating a successful, profitable RV campground.
- Programming figures highly in attracting and maintaining a full RV campground, truly the key to financial success. Programs also usually run at a profit.
- "Reliance on camping income alone is difficult to make a profit". Offering conveniences such as laundry, groceries, board rentals, etc. contribute positively to revenue.
- "A good financial scenario includes generating 50% of income from camping, 25% store, and 25% from boat rentals, bike rentals, etc."
- Provincial parks are regulated in what they can do. The draw in Provincial parks, if allowed, are the extra services (e.g., laundry, day use areas, swimming) and visitor services program.
- They agreed that fixed roof accommodation and RV rental units were in demand and desirable in RV campgrounds. However, some municipal jurisdictions have issues with these developments.

In addition to key components of RV campgrounds in general, urban focused RV campgrounds would do well to include:

- Car rental operations/arrangements.
- Ground tour operations.
- Public transportation services.

4.5.5 Fixed Roof Accommodation: Key Issues

RV campground operators and "exemplary practices" respondents agreed that a full range of accommodation types is desirable in a successful RV campground including:

- Tent rental sites.
- RV rental site – with either a "park unit" or a rental RV on site.
- "Cabins" or motel units.
- Condominium units.

Clearly the motivation for the variety of accommodations include:

- Evident demand for these accommodation types.
- The positive financial margin from these units.
- Market diversification – condo renters may not be in the RV market at all.
- Curiosity market – those who want a "campground" experience but do not wish to purchase a RV.
- Group market – seeking fixed roof in addition to RV sites.
- More efficient use of fixed "community capacity" – pools, community centres etc., a particularly important point where these business units also deliver a marginal revenue.

However, Alberta operators identified a number of significant issues with alternative forms of accommodation in Alberta RV campgrounds.

- Such development cannot occur in Provincial park sites, where it may be most desired.
- RV "rental" sites are rare due to the cost of units in Canada. Where "park units", designed to be taken to a site installed permanently, are permitted and constructed at much lower cost in other countries CSA standards for them are so high in Canada that they are not affordable.
- Placing a full RV unit on site and renting it does occur in Canada. However, the RV unit is so expensive that rental rates are high (a unit in Campbell River rents for $139.00 a night).
- While cabins are popular, they are expensive to build and service. Then some municipalities tax them at year-round commercial accommodation rates, making operations expensive. Other municipalities do not want to approve fixed roof accommodations on seasonal RV campground properties.

- ARCA members identified other impediments to cabin development – zoning restrictions, financing issues, and fuel and utility prices are the most significant issues.

There is a clear demand for a variety of development types in RV campgrounds. Such developments enhance business margins and expand market segments for the RV camping experience. If impediments can be overcome, the result could be more sustainable RV campgrounds in Alberta.

4.5.6 Key Issues: RV Camping in Alberta

Alberta is experiencing most of the key issues facing the RV camping sector in other jurisdictions in Canada. However, some of Alberta's issues may be unique relatively speaking. Key issues are summarized as follows:

- "The cleanliness and quality of RV campgrounds will be the main determinant of whether the affluent boomer market embraces RV camping. At present, the quality of camping product would not justify market support" (RV Association respondent and RV manufacturer).

- Demand/supply issues:

  - Demand for 30-50 amp services on power, drive-thrus, and larger camping sites with full hookups is increasing. Big rig and super stalls with level, concrete parking pads, and 50 amp hookups are needed. "Most RV campgrounds in Alberta do not have the capability to hold "large" RV units".

  - Sites in RV campgrounds that were built more than 20 years age cannot handle new RV units; the sites are too small, with insufficient power supply, and out of date. Upgrading of sites is necessary.

  - In urban centres, the demand to accommodate larger units is there but few RV campgrounds are currently able to meet this demand. There is a need for high quality, urban-focused RV campgrounds around our major cities.

  - Government policy determines level of services available in Provincial campgrounds and protected areas. For some of the RV camping segments this level is less than they desire.

  - High land prices limit the feasibility of RV campgrounds in some of the key tourism areas.

  - "Supply is meeting demand in rural areas".

- Operational issues:
    - Increasing operating costs, power, gas & disposal fees, garbage and liquid waste disposal impact profitability and reinvestment.
    - Increasing fuel prices have resulted in cancellations.
    - Taxes on this seasonal investment are very high.
    - Consistent pricing is needed between government and private campgrounds when they are offering a similar RV campground package of sites and services. The low rates at Provincial campgrounds continue to impede the ability of the private sector to provide quality experiences for a fair price.
    - The need for improved highway signage for private operators is very evident.
- Government related issues:
    - Rules and regulations come from many different government bodies from all levels of government creating difficulties in keeping up with current legislation. One person or department in provincial government is needed to coordinate this information and streamline the information in one book for every owner/operator.
    - Changes to the CSA regulations on playgrounds has caused a lot of RV campgrounds (private and provincial) to replace costly RV campground playgrounds. Those who cannot afford the expensive upgrades may have to shut down their playgrounds.
    - "The Government should move Provincial Parks to Economic Development and Tourism. Environment Protection does not manage based on tourism. You can have protection, profit and tourism together. Currently, the Department does not have that balance." (Note: The Parks portfolio was moved to Alberta Community Development in March, following this focus group session.)
- Marketing issues:
    - "Improved marketing of tourism is needed to bring in enough guests to pay for the development. Better marketing of "rubber tire" tourism is needed (ARCA focus group)."

4.6 The Competitive Environment

While this study does not specifically track the competition, a limited assessment of the RV camping services and markets in the Columbia valley of British Columbia was undertaken. This assessment provides a glimpse of both the competitive product and an idea of the spending by Alberta RV campers in this region.

The many private RV resorts in the Columbia valley compete directly for the Alberta RV owner, and particularly the Calgary market. These private resorts offer advantages for this market over the area product:

- The surroundings are warm in summer, with good lake activity, golf and hot springs;
- Units can be left on site, stored, or settled in seasonal leases;
- Units can be stored over the winter in a number of locations; and
- All amenities, security, power, pools, etc. are provided.

The advantages offered by the Columbia valley private RV campgrounds appear to appeal to Albertans, and particularly to Calgarians. Calgary RV owners cannot camp on a seasonal basis, nor can they store their RV units within Kananaskis Country or Banff National Park. Some of the provincial and national campgrounds also offer fewer services than the RV market may demand. So "supply" of the right kind of RV campground in the right location is restricted in and near the protected mountain region west of Calgary.

Calgarians can, however, cross into B.C.'s Columbia valley. There they can lease a RV site from a private operator on a seasonal basis, obtain full services to the site, and store their unit in a secure RV campground on a year-round basis. The area offers hiking, many clean lakes and beaches, hot springs, and mountains.

The data gathered on RV campgrounds in the Columbia valley illustrates these points:

- Of the total 2,001 RV camping sites in the valley area, 1,278 (63.6%) are in private campgrounds (Alberta ratio is 45%);

- A total of 575 full hookup sites are provided, all in private campgrounds, for a ratio of 45% of sites in private campgrounds. In Alberta, private operators represent 82% of all full hookup sites and 36% of private sites have full hookups.

- The 111 pull through sites are also all in private operations, a ratio of 8.6% (10.3% in Alberta).

The other service offerings of many of these campsites are at the higher level for RV campgrounds.

It is clear to any visitor to this region, that the predominant market is the Alberta market. A license plate review of the Fairmont Hot Springs RV resort, as an example, would show at least 75-80% of license plates to be Alberta. Personal conversations with B.C. operators (Summer, 2000) confirms this observation.

Using conservative assumptions, an estimate of spending by Albertan RV campers in this valley can be made. Assuming 80% summer occupancy of RV sites, a 75% market share by Albertans, and a 90 day "high" season, one would estimate that almost 110,000 RV camping nights by Albertans occurs in this area of B.C.

Taking the logic a step further, these RV campers from Alberta would spend about $2.42 million on the RV campground "gate" alone at an average rate of $22.00 per night. Using the 50/50 gate/non-gate estimate for a strong operation, one would estimate that $4.84 million is spent by Alberta households in RV campgrounds in this B.C. valley.

Finally, if one assumes that RV travelers spend an average $50 per day per household while traveling and that each camping night implies only one camping day, the total expenditure in B.C. amounts to some $5.5 million annually. This would be a conservative spending estimate, representing the "loss" to Alberta of RV camping revenue to B.C.

Saskatchewan also draws significant RV market to its three Provincial parks on the Alberta border. These parks are more than half occupied by Albertans, drawing Alberta spending out of this province.

The competition for the RV market is significant and the revenue involved is significant. Whether or not Alberta can do very much to offset these losses in revenue is a question that might be addressed in the future.

4.7 Conclusion

The conclusions from this research are as follows:

- The RV camping experience, and its market groupings, are fundamentally "occasion-based" markets. An infinite variety of camping experiences, services, amenities and locations are "demanded". The same people who group into one "segment" for one trip might fall into a different "segment" on their next trip. This underlines the fundamental nature of the RV product, a mobile unit providing the comfort of a home with fully independent services.
- Markets can be grouped on the basis of broad segmentation, as suggested in this section:
  - The RV Renter/"Adventurer";

- The "Full Timer";
- The "Destination Camper";
- The "Club Traveler"; and
- The "Independent RV Camper".

These market segments seek different RV campground products and experiences than other segments while on any particular trip.

- ➢ Some segments may not travel to Alberta at all because we do not offer the RV campgrounds they expect to find. We do not know, from this research, whether this is the case or not.
- ➢ Club affiliations impact travel. In particular, clubs organize RV caravan travel and plan trips on the basis of club-affiliated sites. If Alberta has few of such sites, it is unlikely that Club organizations will choose a route through our destination.
- ➢ Club members, and many independent RV travelers, rely on the key rating systems developed for North America – Trailer Life and Woodall's Guide ratings. Club members also seek out Good Sam, Coast to Coast and other club affiliates for the assurance of quality as well as for the discounted price. Alberta, with few club affiliated sites, is not involved in this product offer significantly.
- ➢ The profile of the RV camping market in Alberta primarily represents the urban Alberta population on their weekend camping trips. The RV campground in Alberta fundamentally services this population, and it is the satisfaction of this population with the product that will determine if change is required. The research in this study supports other research suggesting that some change is, in fact, required.
- ➢ Market demand information suggests that the affluent but aging, active baby boom segments will increasingly demand high quality, highly serviced RV campgrounds.
- ➢ RV campground "branding" is important to some market segments. Alberta, with few "branded" RV campgrounds, may be losing market share to other regions in these segments.
- ➢ The keys to a successful RV campground according to most respondents:
  - Clean, quality services, especially common area services (showers, washrooms etc.);
  - Basic utilities – power (30 amp), water, sewer/pumpout;
  - Level, "wide", "private", sites with well planned hookups and good pull throughs;

  - Enhanced services: RV rental units, fixed roof accommodation, pools, clubhouse, store, laundry, cable, phone/modem etc.;
  - Programming – interpretation and entertainment for children and adults;
  - Value added services: beach, rental services; and
  - Diversity of revenue centres for the RV campground operator.

- Fixed roof accommodation represents an issue for RV campground operators in Alberta – municipal regulations, taxation, seasonality are issues that reduce the potential of this option for the RV campground operator.
- Key issues facing the RV campground sector in Alberta today:
  - Demand/supply – while supply meets demand in rural areas, less than desired levels of service in some provincial parks, lack of urban RV campgrounds, and older RV campgrounds that lack modern design/amenities are evident issues;
  - Operational – high utility costs, taxation, low pricing due to public competition, and seasonality are issues;
  - Government related – need for increased interdepartmental coordination, revised CSA regulations, and improved service training; and
  - Marketing - the need for aggressive rubber-tire marketing was documented.
- Competition – an overview of one area of B.C. suggests that Alberta (particularly the Calgary market) is losing significant tourism revenue by RV campers leaving Alberta. While definitive conclusions cannot be made, some apparent advantages of this region are:
  - Water contact lakes, warm summers, golf, hot springs, recreation;
  - Units can be left on site, stored or settled on seasonal leases;
  - Units can be stored over the winter; and
  - All amenities, security, power, pools, etc. are provided.

While it may not be possible to completely overcome some of these advantages, most of them can be addressed through RV campground planning in Alberta.

5.0 RV CAMPGROUND PRODUCT: SEGMENTATION AND SATISFACTION

5.1 Introduction

At the outset of this work, the study team hypothesized a number of RV product segments – Destination resorts, RV Communities and others. The research program tested these hypotheses, and developed the product segmentation identified in this section.

These product segments merely characterize various “resort types” based primarily on interview input and review of research material. Based on web research and “peer identification”, the consultants identified and selected a small number of “best practice” examples – two for each product segment, to illustrate the key characteristics of each RV camping product.

The product segmentation tracks parallel to the market segmentation of the previous segment. However, a number of market segments, at any give time and place, would use one or more of the product segments outlined in this section.

5.2 RV Product Segments

RV product segments were researched through both a telephone interview process with specific operators and a web research process. The website addresses (URL's) are listed in Appendix 2.

5.2.1 Urban Focused RV Destination

RV campground located near or in an urban centre. The focus of the RV campground is to provide the traveller with a safe, secure, accommodation base from which to visit the destination community/city. Such RV campgrounds often provide connections to urban tourism destination amenities – ground services, day tour packaging and other urban services.

- Cherry Hill Park (MD); and
- Burnaby Cariboo RV Park (B.C.).

5.2.2 Franchise RV Campground

Nationwide franchise that may offer membership discounts; camping cabins; special events; cartoon characters; standard rates, amenities and recreation. The franchise approach offers a fixed design “footprint”, branding and awareness marketing, operational assistance, networking and communication, and education for the operator. For the traveller it offers assured, known attributes that do not vary greatly across the region.

- KOA-Calgary West (AB); and
- Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park (Amherstburg, ON).

5.2.3 Destination RV Campground

The destination resort is a well-located RV campground which is the target destination of the RV traveller. It acts as the base for viewing the attractions of what is usually the "rural" region.

- Mount Kidd RV Campground (Kananaskis, AB); and
- Fairmont Hot Springs Resort RV Park (B.C.).

5.2.4 RV "Community Camp" Resort

Facilities offering lots for sale only, membership only, condo parks, time-share parks, etc. Rarely, if ever, do these places accept overnight travellers.

- The Sweet Life RV & Condo Resort (B.C.); and
- Thousand Trails Yosemite Lakes (Groveland, CA).

Because the focus of this report is on particularly the RV camping experience, an "other" category or product segment has not been defined. Such a segment might include National Parks, Provincial parks and itinerant campgrounds here in Alberta. It is recognized that this represents the majority of sites in the province. However, these sites and their characteristics were highlighted in the supply analysis and the camping market was assessed in a previous section. Thus these campgrounds have not been a focus of this section.

A second area of research looked into the international experience with RV camping development. A few "best practice" examples were highlighted in each of:

- **UK-**"The Best of British";
- **France-**Castels Chain;
- **Holland** Tulip Parcs; and
- **Australia:** Big 4 Holiday Parks.

The intent of this work was to determine if any lessons from overseas could be brought to bear in Alberta.

5.3 Exemplary Practices: The Key Questions

Telephone interviews were conducted with the owners/operators of eight RV campgrounds that were selected as examples of "exemplary practices" in the industry. These RV campgrounds were selected to represent the four product segments outlined above. The purpose of the interviews was to gain insight into how the industry can develop better products.

The interviews addressed the following key questions:

- Are there recent trends in the Recreation Vehicle products that have impacted the design or amenities in RV campgrounds?
- What do you see as the major trends in RV markets, and what does this mean for RV campgrounds?
- What are the main components of a successful RV campground?
- How important is "Brand" to the RV campground market?
- What would your "typical" customer/member look for in a RV campground when they are travelling?
- Are there price points for RV campgrounds that could be defined as the "typical"/acceptable prices?
- Describe the economics of running a successful RV campground? How important in terms of contribution to profit, are the various considerations in a RV campground?
- In your experience, is there anything we can learn from the evolution and development of RV campgrounds in Britain, Australia, Europe?
- What are the next two major capital improvements you will be making to your RV campground?
- What are the next two operational improvements you will be making to your RV campground?
- Are there other trends that you consider to be important in terms of RV campground development in the future?

5.4 Exemplary Practices: Overview of Findings

5.4.1 Trends in RV Products and the Importance/Impact on RV Campground Design

Respondents identified the trends in RV products and the importance/impact on RV campground design. The results in the table below identify the responses by each segment. *Note: Ratings were based on a scalar rating from 1-10, with 1 being "not at all important" and 10 being "extremely important". The results under the "low" heading indicate those items that were rated 1 or 2 and the results under the "high" heading were items that were rated 9 or 10.*

TABLE 19								
	Urban		***Franchise***		***Destination***		***Community Camp/Resort***	
	Low	***High***	***Low***	***High***	***Low***	***High***	***Low***	***High***
Unit length/ size		*		*	*			*
Type of unit	*		*		*			
Sliders		*		*				
Engines	*		*		*		*	
Weight			*		*			
Solar Panels	*		*		*		*	
Total power demand 50 amp		*		*	*			
Towing requirements			*		*		*	
Total unit length		*	*	*	*			
Cable/satellite, etc		*	*		*			

All segments indicated that engines and solar panels were trends that were not at all important to the design of a RV campground. Further, the changing and converging technologies are rendering RV campground-based solutions unnecessary. For example, continuous tracking roof mounted satellite dishes are now available for the RV, making cable connections unnecessary. These units will track satellites even when the RV is moving, allowing the "camper" to watch their favourite program while they are on the road.

Telephone and computer technology will also render the "phone/modem" capability to the site unnecessary in the near future. Computers, telephones and Personal Digital Assistants will all be capable of direct connections to the Internet. The major issue with this technology will be its availability in remote locations.

5.4.2 Market Trends Impacting RV Campgrounds

Respondents identified a varied range of the most important trends in the RV market and the impact on RV campgrounds. These include:

- The price of fuel keeps campers closer to home and for longer periods of time.
- There is a tendency for a campground to cater to a particular segment of the market, and to see that same segment year after year.
- Campers are staying at one place for longer periods of time.
- The exchange rate on the dollar is creating a decline in international tourism. As German currency has fallen against the dollar, the cost of Canada has increased, and some reductions in travel have or will follow.

- The expectations of baby boomers are changing. Expectations exist for more high-quality facilities, which they are willing to pay for and they are used to paying for quality.

- The corollary is also evident. If baby boomers do not receive a quality product in the RV camping experience, they will leave the market for other recreation experiences.

5.4.3 Main Components of Successful RV Campgrounds

All respondents acknowledged that the main component of a successful RV campground is the number and variety of activities offered.

Examples of such activities include: programming (interpreters, baby-sitting services); dances, movies, crafts, baseball, bike rentals, and mini-golf.

Comments included:

- In the Urban segment, the number of activities that the campground offers are less important because the location of the RV campground is near an area (urban, tourist, etc.) in which there are lots of things to do. Rather than extensive on-site services, these RV campgrounds require strong "off-site" tourism services including:

    - Ground tour operations – sightseeing;
    - Taxi, transit, and car rental arrangements; and
    - Other "urban" services typical of the region.

- Activities are not a priority for the full-time RV market segment. This market prefers green space, lounges, good security, and 50 amp power.

5.4.4 Importance of Brand

Respondents felt that Branding is important to some, but not all market segments:

- The itinerant "touring" market gravitates toward brand when they are traveling out of their region. Some family markets focus on brand, primarily for the programming afforded their children. "Full timers" do not look for Brand, but rather look for club-affiliated, lower cost RV campgrounds.

- The attraction to brands/franchises is that customers know what to expect.

- Most of the RV campground owners who responded as "best practice" examples indicated that "brand" was not an issue to them because they are established and able to "hold their own".

- All respondents agreed that directories attract itinerant campers and are important to generating business from the American market. Americans tend to use the directories to establish the quality of a RV campground, just as some markets look to the hotel rating to determine the level of service and the price they can expect.

5.4.5 Key Components of the RV Campground

Note: Ratings were based on a scalar rating from 1-10, with 1 being "not at all important" and 10 being "extremely important". The results under the "no" heading indicate those items that were rated 1 or 2 and the results under the "yes" heading were items that were rated 9 or 10.

TABLE 20

	Urban		***Franchise***		***Destination***		***Community Camp/Resort***	
	No	***Yes***	***No***	***Yes***	***No***	***Yes***	***No***	***Yes***
Power –15 Amp	*		*					
Power –30 Amp		*		*		*		
Power –50 Amp		*						
Water		*		*		*		
Sewer		*						
Telephone Hookup			*		*			
Cable TV								
Internet Cable								
Handicap Access							*	
Near Tourist Attractions		*			*			
Near Urban Centre		*			*			
Treed Sites						*		
Good Site Separation						*		
Gated Security						*		
Group Camping		*					*	
Quality Landscaping								
Paved Roads						*	*	
Community Centre						*	*	
Recreation Programming Services						*		
General Store						*		
Business Rooms	*							
Playground						*		
Fitness Centre					*			
Swimming Pool		*					*	
Marina								
Boat Rental								
Bike Rental							*	
Fishing Equipment						*	*	
Propane Supply						*	*	
Security						*		*

For RV campgrounds located near urban centres, it was indicated as important to provide travel agency/trip planning services and access to public transportation and taxi facilities. Due to the proximity of the urban centre, it was not at all important to provide gas/service station or RV repair facilities on site.

5.4.6 Price Points for RV Camping

Price points ranged from $18-$80 Canadian. Comments included:

- All segments stated that prices depend on what activities and amenities the campground offers and who their target market is.
- Most operators stated that cost is generally not an issue to most campers; people do not mind paying for quality and activities.
- A market segment that is considered sensitive to cost is the full-time RV market. This market would most likely to belong to an association or club in order to receive discounts.

5.4.7 Key Success Factors: Financial

Due to the sensitive nature of this question, most respondents indicated general responses. These include:

- Provide a range of extra service.
- Give customers what they want. Encourage and act on surveys, comment cards, etc.
- Appropriate scale of RV campground – while each type of RV campground is different, the average size for the "exemplary" RV campgrounds was 200 sites.
- Make fixed roof accommodation available.

While we had hoped to obtain strong indicators on "key success elements" from these interviews, clearly the respondents were not prepared to share detail on financial matters. The basic comment of all respondents was that success in the RV campground comes not from the "gate revenue" it attracts, but rather from all the value-added services the RV campground can supply at a good margin.

Thus one RV campground rents four wheeled pedal carts to residents. These carts are very popular, are rented all the time, and are made in the "back shop" by the owner over the winter months. The owner sells the vehicles, which are purchased by RV campers with large storage capacities who take them travelling in their unit.

Another site will rent ski boats, windsurfers, paddle boats, and other recreation equipment because they are located on a good water contact lake. The upshot of the input from these respondents is that value-added services is the key and that what these services might be must be determined by the operators tracking what is successful in other operations and verifying the market at their own site.

5.4.8 Planned Capital Improvements

Most respondents indicated that any new capital improvement would be related to activities. Examples of future capital improvements include:

- Expanding or installing a swimming pool;
- Go carts;
- Cabins; and
- Implementing 50 amp service.

5.4.9 Trends for the Future

Respondents identified two important considerations for future campground development:

- Any new campsite development should be large enough to enable the RV campground to keep up with changes in the industry; and

- Telephone/modem access is becoming an issue and demanded by more RV campers.

5.5 International RV Campground Experience

Best practice examples for the international segment are profiled for Holland, Australia, France and the UK. These include:

- **UK**: The Best of British Touring and Holiday Parks;
- **France**: Castels Chain Camping and Caravaning;
- **Holland**: Holland Tulip Parcs; and
- **Australia**: Big 4 Holiday Parks.

Overall, the RV campground experience in these countries is much more developed than in Canada and in Alberta. These mature products are generally owned and run by chain corporations or large franchise operations. Awareness marketing for the whole chain, brand competition, and product positioning is done in a similar fashion to the hotel sector.

But the programs are also linked. For example, each of the four countries provides a link (via the web site) to the other three. Thus these chains cross-market each other for travellers to these countries.

These international RV campgrounds are largely destination RV campgrounds located at or near major attractions or urban centres. People go there to stay for a holiday. Key characteristics:

- They are located near major urban centres or near major destination attractions/areas.
- They offer a full range of product: rental tent sites, rental RV sites, rental RV units, rental cabins, rental or purchase condos, and often hotel rooms.
- They are rated using common rating systems.
- They are larger in scale and offer more enhanced services, and more value-added services than our Canadian parks.

While we do not know the ratios for international sites, it is apparent that a much higher percentage of the RV campground market in these countries does not actually own a RV than is the case in Canada. Also in these countries many more people purchase/rent the site/RV and never move the unit. Thus, the market is quite different than in Alberta.

These key points are illustrated through some of the references below.

5.5.1 Australia: BIG4

There are 145 BIG4 Holiday Parks located on major routes across the country at or near many of Australia's premier holiday destinations. There is a common "star" rating system to indicate quality of these locations.

The current trends for caravan RV campgrounds in Australia include:

- Changing towards resort-style facilities; and
- The increase in self-contained cabins.

5.5.2 Best of British

Around 13 million people in Britain stay in Caravan, camping and holiday RV campgrounds annually in the UK. Some years ago, all tourist boards joined forces to launch a single quality rating system for caravan, camping and holiday RV campgrounds in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

RV campground sizes are generally larger (from 400 total units to 800+ total units) and offer a number of different accommodation options. These include:

- Caravan Holiday Homes – rental cabins permanently located on-site;
- Touring Caravans – towable units located and rented on-site; and

- Motor Caravans – motorhome sites;
- Tent – rental tents on-site; and
- Caravan Site – a RV site rented to the RV owner.

5.5.3 Holland: Holland Tulip Parcs

Twenty-five leading Dutch campsites joined together under the name "Holland Tulip Parcs." Each provides a range of accommodations from bungalows to tents.

5.5.4 France: Les Castels

Consists of 48 selected sites. All include the option of a range of accommodation from bungalows to tents.

Many of the respondents to our other surveys suggested that there are no lessons to be learned from the European experience. However, the basic elements of successful business development can be seen in some of these international examples:

- Economies of scale in management, operations, purchasing;
- Development of common, efficient "footprints" for development;
- Economies in marketing/development of brand awareness; and
- Better customer service – central reservations, staff training, etc.

It is apparent that there is little reason why these same attributes of successful business could not apply in Canada. In fact, some of the franchises and independent developments are adopting key elements of these overseas examples now.

What is not clear is whether those who do not own an RV will choose to stay in an RV resort in a rental unit, tent, RV, or cabin. This is a relatively untested question in Alberta that bears further research work.

5.6 Price Points and Pricing Strategies

Respondents to most of the telephone inquiries offered that camping rates increased with services provided, and that there was not specific price point for RV camping. More services generally implies a higher average rate.

TABLE 21:
COMPARISON OF RV CAMPING RATES, ALBERTA AND "EXEMPLARY PRACTICES" EXAMPLES ($CDN)

Campground	*Full Hookup Rate*	*Power/ Water*	*No Services*
ALBERTA DATA BASE			
National Parks	$24		$13 - $17
Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas	$20-$22	$15-$22	$7-$19
Private Operators	$25 - $31	$20 - $25	$13 - $20
EXEMPLARY PRACTICES			
Urban Focused			
CHERRY HILL PARK			
Premium Site	$85		
Pull Through	$70		
RV	$62		
Tent			$46
Rental RV	$115		
Rental Cabin	$77		
BURNABY CARIBOO			
32 foot + RV	Low season: $35 High season: $38		
Under 32 Feet	Low season: $32		
	High season: $35		
Other charges			Phone: $3.00 per night Cable: $2.00 per night
Franchise RV Campground			
YOGI BEAR'S JELLY STONE PARK (Ontario)	Low season: $25 High season: $31		
Destination Resort			
FAIRMONT HOT SPRINGS			
Deluxe site	$34		
30 amp	$25		
15 amp	$22		
Unserviced			$17
MOUNT KIDD			
RV Site	$29	$23 - $25	$19

Campground	*Full Hookup Rate*	*Power/ Water*	*No Services*
RV Community Camp Resort			
SWEET LIFE (BC)	$18,000 - $60,000 per RV site Condo $85,000 and up Time share 1 wk in condo: $6,000 RV Low season - $30 RV high season - $42		Annual Condo Fee.
Tri West Resort (Alta)	$25,000 - $35,000		Condo Fees about $100.
International Sites			
UNITED KINGDOM	$21-$26 extra $4-$5 for power		
AUSTRALIA (5 Star) Pricing is for two people on a site. Additional children are $3.15 per day, additional adults are $6.30/day.	Deluxe Villa (2 bedrooms) - $86 Deluxe Villa (1 bedroom) - $82 Standard Cabin - $38 Ensuite Powered - $24 Powered Site - $20		$17
FRANCE (Castels High Season)	Tent (4) $69-$87 Mobilehome (4) $54-135 Mobilehome (6) $71-154 Chalet (6) $77-$173 "Gite" (6) $9-$188		
HOLLAND (De Katjeskelder)	Site (4) $43		

The table above clearly illustrates that Canada, and Alberta in particular, prices RV campgrounds at the lower end of the spectrum. The "exemplary practices" RV campgrounds offer more services and they charge more money for the site. Charges for cabins, park unit rentals and other services are also high relative to Alberta pricing.

5.6.1 Pricing Strategies

The interviews suggested two pricing strategies for successful RV campgrounds.

Stratified Pricing of Core Product – The core product, RV rental site is differentiated in some RV campgrounds on the basis of "paved pad", "wider frontage", "50 amp service", "lakefront" or myriad other ways of differentiating sites of higher value. The daily pricing of these sites was higher.

Products such as rental RVs and cabins have higher margins and obtain higher rates. At one BC RV campground the 35 foot RV unit rents for $139 Cdn during the high season. Cabins rent from $75 and up.

Value added Services – The pricing of value added services, from bike rentals, pool usage, newspaper delivery, telephone, cable, and other services was a standard way of increasing value. Some of the top sites also have first class restaurant/banquet facilities that are rented.

Unbundling the Travel Party – Some RV campgrounds price on the basis of two persons, one vehicle. Extra fees are charged for additional children, additional adults, or additional vehicles.

Alberta operators appear to offer "gate" pricing that is similar to other Canadian sites. The range of $20-$29 for full hookups and $18-$20 for power and water is common. However, Alberta operators, on average, are well below the pricing of the top sites in Canada ($34 - $38). The Alberta average ranges between 30% and 70% below the top prices in Canadian RV campgrounds.

Alberta's private operators appear to be offering services and pricing that is similar to the exemplary practices operators. However, the core pricing appears to be at the lower end of the spectrum, and may be all that the market is prepared to pay for the service.

5.6.2 RV Owner Campground Satisfaction

RV owner satisfaction was profiled in the 1999 GoRVing report referenced earlier. Provincial park camper satisfaction is tracked by the provincial government.

Based on the GoRVing research, the following elements of satisfaction were most important:

- The things most frequently cited as what they liked in government parks were "Clean/well maintained (45%) and "Great Scenery" (33%), "large private/single sites" (20%) and "Fishing, Trails, Beaches (20%).

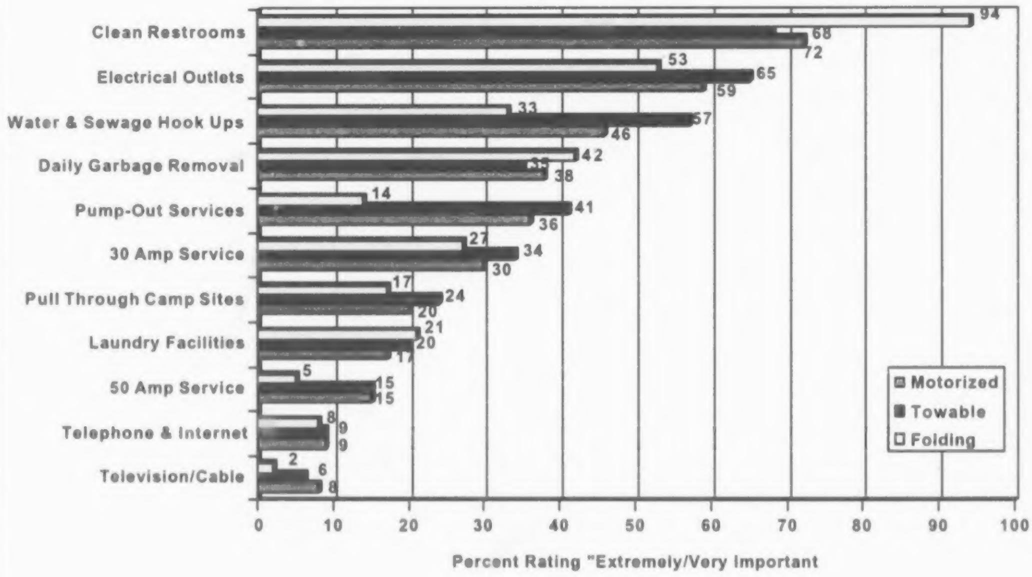
- The things most frequently cited as important for private campgrounds were “Good extras – playgrounds, fishing, trails, beaches”(28%), “Clean”(19%), “Good facilities – toilets etc”(19%), and “Friendly/helpful”(18%).

- The things most disliked about government parks were “Not well serviced – toilets, water, showers, power”(18%), Cost (12%), and “Crowded/no privacy”(10%).

- The things most disliked about private campgrounds were “Small sites/too close”(20%), “Noisy/crowded/small sites/too close”(20%), “not enough/not clean facilities – toilets, showers”(18%), “Noisy/unsuitable campers”(11%), and “Cost”(10%).

- Finally, this survey tracked the most important factors in the RV campground, by ownership category, for the RV owners in their sample. The data is represented in the table below. The most important factors.... Clean restrooms, electrical outlets, and water and sewage hookups are shared by all three ownership types. These results reflect the “basic services” package that is represented in a RV campground.

TABLE 22:
Importance When Camping, By Type of RV Owned



Source: GoRVing Canada Usage and Attitude Study, 1999

Satisfaction with Alberta Provincial Parks

Parks and Protected Areas Division completed visitor satisfaction surveys in selected parks and recreation areas in 1998 and 1999. The survey results for 1999 show that levels of satisfaction for 36 of the 38 categories measured decreased slightly from satisfaction levels reported in 1998 (Source: Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Survey: Provincial Summary Report, 1999).

Since the basic services of the RV campground and their condition is so important to the RV owner, this situation in provincial parks needs to be addressed in a timely fashion.

5.7 RV Clubs: An Important Intermediary

Canada-wide only 12% of RV owners belong to RV clubs. Through their connections to RV owners and with RV suppliers, clubs play an important intermediary role in the RV industry. More importantly, they are the conduits through which the RV rating systems are produced, upgraded and maintained in a current state. They are also the major distribution channel for these ratings. RV Clubs offer a variety of services to RV owners, who join for an annual fee.

5.7.1 Canadian Automobile Association and Alberta Motor Association

The largest and longest serving automobile clubs in Canada are represented nationally by the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) and in Alberta by the Alberta Motor Association (AMA). The CAA/AMA offer a category of membership, called RV Plus, particularly targeted to the RV owner. The member benefits include:

- The AMA magazine (Westworld);
- Emergency road service (for the RV owner);
- RV insurance;
- Travel health plans/insurance;
- International driving permits;
- RV service at specific CAA affiliates;
- Trip planning, reservations, “trip tik”, Tour Books;
- “On-line” services;
- Discount card for retail services;
- Vehicle inspection service;
- Approved repair facilities;
- “Battery Express” service;
- Theft/accident prevention program (Stop! Thief);
- Road reports;
- Reservation service;
- Passport photos;
- Maps;
- Driver education, training;

- RV driver training; and
- Credit card protection.

The "main" member fee is approximately $80.00 with AMA, while additional members from the same family pay less.

While the CAA focuses on the motorist, it offers specific services for the RV motorist. All of its general services are made available to the RV motorist in addition to those that are more specific to the RV owner.

5.7.2 Explorer's Club

The largest club in Canada is the Explorer's Club, a national club with office in Ontario. The Explorer's Club offers the following member benefits:

- A RV magazine - The RV Gazette;
- Emergency road service at a reasonable cost;
- RV Insurance;
- Home and auto insurance;
- Travel health plans at group discounts;
- Priority RV service at specified dealers;
- Financial advisory service;
- "On-line" services;
- Discount card for campgrounds and dealers;
- Club rally program;
- Club cash – a rewards program;
- Car rental discounts; and
- Hotel discounts.

Full member rates are $80 for two years.

5.7.3 Good Sam RV Club

The largest US club is the Good Sam Club. Its list of benefits include:

- Discounts – RV campgrounds, RV parts and accessories, "Lens" express, LP gas, car rental, phone service, retail discounts;

- Insurance – VIP, group health/accident, Canadian travel program, Continued Service Plan;

- Emergency – ERS, CVP roadside assistance, emergency assistance plus, "Standby Sam's Network";

- Club Activities – Samborees, RV tours, cruises, "Caraventures", defensive driving courses, chapter activities throughout the U.S.;
- Financial Services – RV financing, GS Credit card, Loss protection, Affinity banks;
- Travel services – Trip routing, travel plaza network, mail forwarding, discount phone service;
- Other Benefits – Accessories, Tech topics, product testing, "Action line", Lost pet, key service, Parking Rights manual; and
- A subscription of Highway magazine, the publication of the Good Sam Club.

Through Good Sam Club, the member has access to more than 12,000 RV campgrounds listed in Trailer Life magazine. The Trailer Life Directory can be accessed in CD ROM format, and includes:

- Complete "Good Sam" club RV campground listings;
- 15,500 campground listings, representing over 1 million sites;
- 7,000 RV campgrounds with pull through sites;
- 10,000 sites for "Pull outs";
- List of "modem friendly" campgrounds;
- 2,200 RV service centres;
- 1,100 tourist attractions; and
- Ratings for pre inspected and rated campgrounds.

The Trailer Life Directory lists and rates many of the private RV campgrounds in Alberta. It provides mapping to reach these places through MapQuest. Most sites are rated using the three point Trailer Life scale:

TL 6/7/8

- 6 – Completeness and quality of campground, services, amenities, facilities.
- 7 – Cleanliness, physical characteristics, of restrooms, showers, and other public service infrastructure.
- 8 – Visual appearance and environmental quality of the site.

The rating system also includes all Good Sam RV campgrounds in Alberta. There are four RV campgrounds in Edmonton, one in Red Deer, two in Calgary and a few other RV campgrounds in the province. These RV campgrounds are not recorded as Good Sam RV campgrounds on the Alberta database as they are not listed in the public material used as sources.

Trailer Life magazines is the oldest dedicated magazine for RV market, and is a monthly publication that is over 50 years old. Its online capabilities today provide the serious RV enthusiast with a current CD-ROM with thousands of RV campgrounds and sites in North America.

5.7.4 Family Motor Coach Association

FMCA was started in America in 1963, and is perhaps the oldest RV Club on record. It has registered some 270,000 families as members over the years and has 112,000 active members in North America. It has also registered 7,000 commercial members, and presently has 2,350 active commercial members. Part of its mandate is to encourage purchase and use of RVs by families, and its commercial affiliations bring purchasing benefits to members. Its services include:

- *Family Motor Coaching* Magazine;
- Travel Services – mail forwarding, trip routing, emergency road service, medical evacuation, emergency driver program, emergency stopping spots (homes of members), discount telephone card, Internet access, cell phone service;
- Insurance Services – RV coach, Accidental death, and travel insurance;
- Financial – RV financing, credit card programs;
- Discounted services – motorhome components (comprehensive), Irving Oil, Exitsource, Travel centre/Truck stop directory, Value cards, Vision care; and
- Other Benefits – Member emblems, anti theft program, advertising special rates, lost key return.

The annual convention of FMCA is a major event for the host region. The convention in 1985 had a peak number – 3,000 coaches – attend it. The convention this year is scheduled for Edmonton, Alberta, and some 1,500 units are anticipated to locate at the Edmonton Northlands site.

5.7.5 Coast to Coast

The Coast to Coast organization is a membership club that offers discounted rates at some 1,000 RV campgrounds in North America. The benefits of a Coast to Coast membership include:

- Camping at 400 "premier"" resorts for as little as $6.00 US per night;
- Camping at 600 Good Neighbor Parks (Coast affiliates) for $11 U.S. per night;
- Travel services – airline, cruise, tour and trip planning discount services;

- Lodging and dining discounts at 2,100 facilities;
- Car rental membership and discounts;
- RV rental discounts;
- Emergency road service;
- Vehicle financing;
- RV and auto insurance;
- Universal Health Card;
- Lens Express vision plan; and
- Coast to Coast member magazine.

Only seven of our Alberta campgrounds are listed as Coast to Coast affiliates.

5.7.6 Camping World President's Club

The club organization attached to Camping World, the immense U.S. based RV retailer provides members the following benefits:

- Extra 10% off all Camping World products;
- Discounted tours, destination packages;
- Sales event invitations (exclusive);
- Discount phone service;
- Coupon book;
- Campground Directory;
- RV loans –by-phone;
- Term life insurance;
- RV/Auto insurance;
- Discounted magazine subscriptions – Trailer Life, Motorhome Magazine; and
- Emergency Road Service.

5.7.7 Woodall's

While not specifically a club, Woodall's has one of the oldest and most respected directory systems in America.

Woodall's is primarily a publisher of RV books now, specialized in its own annual North American Campground Directory. It also produces an eastern and Western regional directory and some six or seven specialized regional directories, RV cookbooks, Rental guides for lodging rentals at RV campgrounds, Recreation activity guides, and a tenting guide.

Many independent RV owners use Woodall's guides because they can be purchased in many bookstores.

5.7.8 Conclusion

There are many other local and regional club organizations in addition to the large organizations identified here. However, the basic concept of the club relationship is the same:

- Provide discounted services needed by the RV owner by capitalizing on the power of group purchasing.
- Link club members to quality, rated camping facilities to reduce uncertainty, improve the camping experience, and better ensure the satisfaction of the RV owner.

Club members represent, at the very least, a large target market of committed RV travelers. The RV campground industry could organize to address these travelers through their publications and communications channels.

We understand that today the major RV organizations are fundamentally linked together. One publishes directories for all others; another provides retail power and connections to the others; they all use one or two specialize RV insurance providers for RV insurance, roadside assistance, auto insurance, term life and other services.

5.8 Training for RV Owners

The consulting team was asked to address, where possible, the "other needs" of the RV owner, the need for trip planning, discounts, travel insurance, and training. The previous section addresses the majority of these questions. Essentially RV clubs provide the low cost services RV owners desire through group purchasing power.

Training was another area of interest. Three training programs for RVers are profiled here. They establish that there is a demand for such training and that there are a great range of individual "courses" that interest the RV market.

The CAA/AMA organization offers a specific driver education program for the RV owner. This program teaches RV safety, RV operations, and defensive driving for the RV market.

Two organizations, one in the western USA and one in Canada offer annual training "conferences" for RV owners. These training programs are set up in a conference format and are attached to higher education institutions. Each program is profiled below.

5.8.1 "Life on Wheels"

The Life on Wheels program, founded by Gaylord Maxwell, is a for profit organization that organizes and hosts an annual program of RV training courses on campus at University of Idaho, Moscow. Beginning with a single course, this Enrichment Program had fifteen students in a weeklong format in 1994. Today it has served 3,500 students and operates from campuses in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and this year New Mexico is being added.

Instructed by experts in the RV field, this program covers the ground from the RV lifestyles to brake servicing in three major streams:

- Lifestyle – fulltiming, boondocking, choosing an RV, snowbird roosts, travel in Mexico etc.;
- Technical – gas vs. diesel, tow rigs, tow bars, tow safety, maintenance, internal systems; and
- Lifestyle Enhancement – cooking, photography, computers, working on the road, pets.

Safety issues are a primary focus of all areas with special focus on RV driving school, weight safety, fire safety, personal safety and other areas of safety.

The conference cost was $189 U.S. in 2000.

While a detailed list of the courses offered in 2000 is included in the Appendix, a sampling of the program includes:

- Driving towables;
- Awnings: Care and feeding;
- Spartan chassis;
- Radial tire safety;
- Fulltiming;
- Service Maintenance;
- Dinghy towing;
- Batteries and inverters;
- Solar power;
- Back clinic;
- Digital photography;
- RV Driving;
- Good Sam Club;
- Septic systems;
- Computer basics;
- FMCA;
- Digital Satellite Systems;
- Accessories;
- Packing an RV;
- Performance diesel;
- Internet;

- Propane;
- Map reading;
- Desktop publishing;
- Onan generators;
- Volunteering;
- Sit and be fit;
- Stress Management;
- Freightliner chassis; and
- Personal Safety.

Students come to this program from all over the western USA, although they have had students from many overseas destinations as well. The testimonial comments are a credit to the program and an indicator that the content is thought to be needed by the RV owning population.

5.8.2 Okanagan University College

Al Cohoe was a long serving instructor in the RV technician program at OUC when he was asked to teach one of the courses at University of Idaho. He ended up teaching nine courses and has been a guest instructor at the Life on Wheels program in all its campuses.

Mr. Cohoe started a similar program, called RV Lifestyles Seminars at OUC. The program uses the OUC campus for three days in June, and local instructors and specialists from the college program and local businesses or services are used to instruct the program. The range of courses is similar to those in Idaho:

- Appliance maintenance;
- Analyzing ownership costs;
- Batteries;
- Community on the Road (Anthropology);
- Computers;
- CPR techniques;
- Diesel maintenance;
- "Feed, Don't Poison Your Spouse";
- Estate planning;
- Generator servicing;
- Space planning;
- Water quality;
- NWT Yukon Roads;
- RV Driving tips;
- Driveline Maintenance;
- Rvers Online;
- RV Insurance;
- Tailoring your first aid kit;

- Trailer Suspension; and
- Winter Use.

Unlike the U.S. program, the OUC program is a product of the College and is offered on a non-profit basis.

While the program now gets a good share of market from Alberta, it would be difficult to transport the program to, for example, Red Deer College, as it uses a lot of local professional people who teach the program as a sideline.

As an increasing number of RV owners look to maintain their units and enhance their lifestyles, one would expect these programs to be increasingly popular.

6.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Summary of Major Findings

Major findings of the study have been summarized in the categories following.

6.1.1 RV Campground Supply

- Alberta's 359 RV campgrounds offer 33,122 sites at a variety of service levels and prices.
- The average size of the RV campground in Alberta is 92 units. The range of sizes, however, is significant: for National Parks it is 180 units, for Provincial Parks, 93 units; for County, Municipality and Municipal District RV campgrounds it is 50-55 units; and for private operators the average size is 93 units.
- The market share of RV campgrounds and campsites in Alberta, by type of ownership, include:

TABLE 23:
MARKET SHARE OF RV CAMPGROUNDS AND CAMPSITES IN ALBERTA

	Campgrounds	*Sites*
Private Operators	45%	45%
Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas	30%	30%
Municipalities	10%	6%
National Parks	7%	14%
Clubs	4%	3%
Counties	3%	2%
Municipal Districts	1%	1%

- A low percentage of total sites have the higher levels of service sought by some RV segments – 30/50 amp power, pull throughs, full hookups, and community-focused services.
- Alberta sites lack variety of tenure – few offer condo sites, motels, RV rental, tent rental and other options.

6.1.2 Trends Affecting RV Camping

- The baby boom generation is the major force impacting the RV market. This will continue as this population ages. RV ownership is forecast to grow in the order of 20-32% in the coming decade or more based largely on this demographic.
- RV rental markets are expected to grow strongly in coming years.
- The demand for "quality" and services in the RV campground will increase. Higher prices for more/better services will be accepted.

6.1.3 RV Camping Markets

- Recent estimates based on CTS/ITS data are that of a total of 5.1 million camping person-nights (RV and non-RV) were spent in Alberta campgrounds in 1999, broken down by origin as follows:

TABLE 24:
CAMPING PERSON-NIGHTS SPENT BY VISITORS IN ALBERTA 1999

	Person-Nights (Thousands)	*Percent*
Albertans	3,300	64%
Other Canadians	700	14%
U.S.	460	9%
Overseas	650	13%
TOTAL	**5,100**	**100%**

- The table following illustrates market share by region:

TABLE 25:
ESTIMATED CAMPING VISITATION IN PERSON-NIGHTS TO ALBERTA'S TOURISM DESTINATION REGIONS, 1999

Region (TDR)	*Person Night (Thousands)*	*Percent*
Alberta's North	370	7.3%
Edmonton and Area	300	5.9%
Central Alberta	1,900	37.5%
Calgary and Area	330	6.5%
Alberta's South	690	13.6%
Alberta's Rockies	1,470	29.2%
TOTAL	**5,060**	**100%**

- The RV rental nights were estimated to be some 500,000 household camping person-nights in Western Canada annually. Alberta would likely account for 1/3 or more of these nights, or 165,000 household camping nights.

- It is estimated that over 2 million household camper-nights are spent at Alberta campgrounds annually. At average daily expenditures per travel party of a conservative $50 Canadian, these direct expenditures of this camping market are over $100 million annually. It is estimated that 70%-80% of these campers are RV campers.

- International visitation to Banff and Jasper National Parks is higher than in other areas of Alberta, accounting for 46% of camper nights in Banff and 37% in Jasper.

- Five camping market segments were identified:

  - RV Rental/Adventurer;
  - The RV Full Timer;
  - The Destination Traveler;
  - The Club Traveler; and
  - The "Independent" RV Camper.

Each segment demonstrates different characteristics and seeks a different experience in the RV campground product.

- Camping in Alberta is primarily a regional/provincial activity of Alberta residents. It is family focused, with urban residents leaving the cities, mainly on weekends, to enjoy camping.

- RV Camping markets have common needs for basic services – clean washrooms, 30 amp power, water, sewer/pumpout, level sites with good separation, wide enough for modern units, and designed for pull through.

- "Branding" of RV campgrounds is considered important to RV travelers from outside Alberta. However, this branding is not considered important by the industry association in Alberta.

- Alberta's high serviced RV campgrounds are well located for resident markets but not as well for visitor markets. The public campgrounds with lower service levels occupy the destination sites for visitors to Alberta.

6.1.4 Product Segments

- Four product segments are evident:

  - Urban Focused RV;

  - Franchise RV Campground;
  - Destination RV Campground; and
  - RV "Community Camp" Resort.

- Alberta is serviced well only in the Destination RV campground segment and this segment has many specific challenges as well.

- Variety of accommodation types on tenure in the RV campground is a key indicator of business success. Alberta RV campgrounds have less variety than exemplary RV campgrounds.

- RV campgrounds in other jurisdictions are "rated" with reliable indicators of service levels and quality. Although Alberta private RV campgrounds are rated by available systems (Trailer Life), all RV campgrounds are not rated.

- Alberta's major tourism generators are mountains and scenic areas - have primarily been served by public campgrounds. These campgrounds have lower service levels for the RV traveler.

- Alberta's prices are lower than "exemplary practices" RV campgrounds. However, so are their services. Alberta's prices are comparable to average pricing in Canada.

- RV Clubs represent a large market that seeks quality, branded RV campgrounds. Alberta does not communicate significantly with these clubs.

6.2 Strategic Implications

The research conducted in this study has been primarily exploratory in nature. In such a case, conclusive strategies cannot be developed. However, where findings have suggested gaps, issues or opportunities, critical strategies have been suggested. Further research and analysis should accompany each strategy to execution.

6.2.1 Alberta's Product Market Match

Based on the product and market segments identified in this report and the findings about Alberta's strengths and weaknesses, Alberta's existing product/market match can be summarized. It is also possible to infer the opportunities available in Alberta from this information.

TABLE 24:
ALBERTA'S PRODUCT/MARKET MATCH

Product Segment	***Market Segment Served***	***Alberta SWOT***
Urban Focused RV Campground	➢ The "Club" Traveler ➢ The Independent RV Camper ➢ The Destination Camper	*Strengths* ➢ Major cities are strong tourism draws. ➢ Good mix of existing RV campgrounds near major urban centres. *Weaknesses* ➢ The urban services of top RV campgrounds are not provided in most sites. ➢ Little communication to "club" traveler or association members. *Opportunities* ➢ Expand one or more site to scale and amenities of full urban RV campground. ➢ Edmonton – one or more expansions, or enhancements to a number of RV campgrounds. ➢ Calgary – expand services in existing RV campground (s). ➢ Red Deer – opportunity for one urban focused full service park. ➢ Communicate to association/club segment.
Franchise RV Campgrounds	➢ The Destination Camper ➢ The Independent RV Camper ➢ The "Club" Traveler	*Strengths* ➢ Some independent RV campgrounds are high quality, full-service RV campgrounds. *Weaknesses* ➢ Best market locations are held by Provincial/National parks. ➢ Independent operators do not see strong case for franchise operations. ➢ Lack of franchise RV campgrounds means franchise operations are not visible in the market place and to the market segments they serve.

Product Segment	***Market Segment Served***	***Alberta SWOT***
Franchise RV Campgrounds (continued)	➢ The Destination Camper ➢ The Independent RV Camper ➢ The "Club" Traveler	*Opportunities* ➢ Conversion of one or more existing RV destination RV campgrounds to franchise RV campgrounds. ➢ One or more franchise RV campgrounds developed near major Alberta attractions. ➢ Increased market of long-haul club and independent touring markets.
Destination RV Campground	➢ Destination RV Camper ➢ Independent RV Camper ➢ Full Timer ➢ Club Traveler ➢ Renter/Adventurer	*Strengths* ➢ Good existing product in some areas of Alberta. ➢ Great natural assets and existing provincial parks in major destination areas. ➢ Good service to Alberta urban markets. *Weaknesses* ➢ Lack of awareness of existing RV destination RV campgrounds. ➢ Provincial parks do not have desired services, i.e., few destination RV campgrounds in some of the best locations. ➢ Capitalization, operational, regulatory, and seasonality issues in developing such RV campgrounds. *Opportunities* ➢ Strategically encourage location of high quality destination RV campgrounds in areas of high tourism demand. ➢ Strategically upgrade some provincial campgrounds to destination resort status. ➢ Increase awareness of Alberta's RV campgrounds in key market segments. ➢ Increase "rated" and club affiliated RV campgrounds in Alberta.

Product Segment	***Market Segment Served***	***Alberta SWOT***
RV "Community Camp" Resort	➢ Destination RV Camper	*Strengths* ➢ Alberta has several of these resorts, mostly in central Alberta serving Alberta urban markets. ➢ Resorts appear to be highly occupied. *Weaknesses* ➢ Discomfort of municipalities. ➢ Additions to these condominium plans are not likely. ➢ Not located near major attractions – National Parks, mountains, where national and international demand might occur. *Opportunities* ➢ A prototype RV campground could be located near a major destination attraction – national and international market testing.

This product/market match does not address product for the RV rental adventure market segment. This segment matches best to National Parks and Provincial Parks, and it does not seek higher levels of service.

The opportunity for this segment of the market would mainly focus around making it aware of the fine campgrounds in Alberta that are located "off the beaten path". Nearby services for the RV traveler in communities and public or private areas should be highlighted.

Alberta's destination attributes – its scenic areas, clean environment, variety of outdoor activities are well matched to the RV market today and for the coming decades. By moving the camping product slightly more toward the national/international "models", Alberta could increase its market appeal.

6.2.2 Alberta's Competitive Position

Can Alberta compete for the growing RV markets from North America and overseas? Can we provide the kind of RV camping experience that will entice Alberta destination campers in B.C. and Saskatchewan to choose Alberta?

The findings of this study are that Alberta appears to be at a competitive disadvantage in the following areas:

- RV campgrounds offering 30 amp service, 50 amp service, full hookups, and pull throughs.
- Full service urban RV campgrounds near major cities.
- Branded RV campgrounds.

Alberta's Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas (PPRA) represent a specific challenge for Alberta. These areas tend to be located in many of the most desirable destination areas, yet they do not offer the level of RV facility desired by some market segments. While this does not necessarily reduce Alberta's PPRA competitiveness, since most competitive Provincial park systems offer similar products, it may be a strategic disadvantage to attracting the RV camping market.

A key question is "Can we do much to change our situation?" While we believe that the answer is "yes", it needs to be qualified with some fundamental statements of our situation:

- Alberta has seven National Parks/National Historic Sites, more UNESCO world heritage sites than any other provincial/state jurisdiction in the world, and some 324 provincial parks and recreation areas. These are all protected resources, and in most of them destination RV campground development is and should be precluded. Thus the strength of our natural environment and our protection of it means we should not develop RV campground products in most of these areas. Those few parks or recreation areas that can be serviced for the RV traveller must be carefully selected.
- Alberta is at a disadvantage in terms of "water contact activity" lakes. Our prairie lakes tend to be warmer and "greener" than others while our mountain lakes and rivers are clear but cold. The Columbia valley has large, clean lakes good for swimming and boating, a pleasant climate, and land for outdoor activities and recreation. Even with more competitive product in Alberta, it would be unreasonable to think the Alberta outbound market could be fully recaptured.

What is also evident from this research is that other regions are moving toward RV camping "chains", branded developments, higher service levels, and more recreation programming. If Alberta does not evolve some of its product in this direction, it will not win a share of these markets.

The strategic implications following speak to some of the key thrusts in an Alberta response.

6.2.3 Strategic Implications: Opportunities to Make Alberta More Competitive

A number of strategic directions for Alberta follow directly from the findings of this study.

RV Campground Improvements

Alberta's competitive position in the RV camping market could be improved by encouraging the following RV campground improvements:

- Foster development of a variety of accommodation types and tenure options within existing RV resorts by reducing or removing impediments such as some municipal regulations, inappropriate taxation, and inappropriate utility/CSA regulations.
- Review of municipal planning development regulations affecting RV campgrounds. A focus on enabling a variety of accommodation types, of redressing taxation issues, and of ensuring safe, secure, appropriately serviced RV campgrounds should apply.
- Government departments should work together to ensure RV destination RV campground levels of service are provided in strategic PPRA parks to improve appeal to the RV market.
- Encourage redesign of existing RV campgrounds to better serve the newer RV units, including:
  - Wider sites with more site separation and well located connection stations to handle multiple-slide units;
  - Longer sites, with either pull through capacity or design for wider turning radius; and
  - Long, level RV pads at sites, paved where appropriate.
- Encourage appropriate levels of utility services in RV campgrounds, focusing on a minimum 30 amp service. More sites with 50 amp service are desirable in some RV campgrounds.
- Encourage development of additional value added services in RV campgrounds – bicycle, boat, or other appropriate rentals, retail services and other services that contribute net margin to the operation.
- Encourage appropriate services for the communication/electronic needs of RV travelers. While this may imply the need for cable and telephone/modem services in the immediate future, converging technologies should be monitored closely.

- Review the issues documented here in the context of design standards applicable to RV campgrounds. Conduct a joint review with an Alberta municipal jurisdiction with significant experience with the wide variety of RV campground types identified in this report.

RV Campground Development in Alberta

- Encourage development of full service RV campgrounds near urban areas:
    - Upgrade well located, urban focused RV campgrounds to competitive standard where appropriate; and
    - Encourage affiliation of urban RV campgrounds with clubs/travel guides where appropriate.
- Encourage upgrading of specific, strategically selected provincial parks to the destination RV campground level. Resource protection goals will be paramount in the selection considerations
- Foster development of RV destination RV campgrounds near major Alberta attractions such as the mountain region.
- Encourage variety in the RV destination RV campground – variety of tenure types, variety of accommodation types, variety in pricing in order to make RV campgrounds stronger attractions as well as strong businesses.
- Government departments should work with industry to encourage private destination RV campground development in strategic areas of the province.

RV Campground Image and Positioning

- Encourage all RV campgrounds in Alberta to be rated by Trailer Life. Maintain updated ratings of Alberta's RV campgrounds.
- Communicate the major RV campground standards and ratings through available communication channels.
- Communicate the Woodall's rating, Good Sam membership, and other club affiliations of Alberta RV campgrounds through appropriate communication channels.
- Address communications with the "RV Club" segment through research and planning.
- Ensure that the RV rental market has access to communication about the variety of camping experiences provided in areas "off the beaten path" in Alberta.

6.3 Conclusion

The exploratory nature of this work precludes truly conclusive statements. However, there is sufficient evidence to suggest an opportunity for Alberta to improve its position in the RV marketplace by improving both the physical design and the range of services offered in our RV campgrounds.

Additional work would be beneficial in this case, as there are major gaps in the data. It would be beneficial to know the actual number of RV units owned in Alberta, the number of active RV users, the volume of RV usage in campgrounds, and the specific services and amenities desired by these markets. It would also be good to know market origins, seasonality of usage, market segments characteristics and visitation behaviour. Finally, research is needed concerning why some market segments (Full timers, Clubs) apparently do not visit Alberta in significant numbers. Some of these data gaps could be filled through a survey of RV campers in Alberta's RV campgrounds and sites. This might be a first step toward a more solid understanding of this market.

It is recognized that some of the initiatives referred to in this report may represent a major challenge. Upgrading existing RV campgrounds to prevailing standards may reduce the number of sites in order to create wider or pull through sites. The revenue yield may decrease as a result. Alberta RV campground operators also face the significant challenge of a short RV "season", high site development/servicing costs in many areas, and difficulty in obtaining conventional financing. These issues should be addressed by stakeholders as they move forward with responses to the challenges set out in this report.

The issues documented in this report should be reviewed in the context of design standards applicable to RV campgrounds. A joint review by Provincial departments and an Alberta municipal jurisdiction with significant experience with the wide variety of RV campground types identified in this report, would be desirable.

APPENDIX 1

THE WOODALL'S RATING SYSTEM

APPENDIX 2

DEFINITION OF RECREATIONAL VEHICLE TYPES

(From GoRVing.org Website)

(Prices are in U.S. Dollars)

APPENDIX 3

WEB SITE REFERENCES FOR "EXEMPLARY PRACTICES"

Urban Focused RV Destination

www.cherryhillpark.com
www.bcrvpark.com

Franchise RV campgrounds

www.woodalls.com/a/01623_calgarywestkoa.html
http://www.worldsites.net/ybear/rates.html

Destination RV Campground

www.mountkiddrv.com
http://www.fairmonthotsprings.com/html/accorvpark.html

RV Community Camp Resort

http://www.sweetlife.com/
http://www.thousandtrails.com/

International

UK
http://www.bob.org.uk/
http://www.ukparks.co.uk/blair/

France
http://www.les-castels.com/index.html

Holland
http://www.hollandtulipparcs.nl/index-e.html

Australia
http://www.big4.com.au/

APPENDIX 4

REPORT TABLES:
DOMESTIC CAMPERS IN ALBERTA

APPENDIX 5

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

RV ASSOCIATIONS

Hi. I'm calling you from Western Management Consultants in Edmonton. We are a management consulting organization working the Alberta Government and recreational vehicle associations in Alberta, looking into the camping experience in Alberta. The goal of the study is to help the industry develop better products tailored specifically to the needs of their potential visitors.

As an important part of this work, we wanted to talk with a number or RV Associations to include their views about what their customers want in a camping experience, and about trends in RV campgrounds. I was hoping you would be prepared to spend 15 minutes with me on the phone.

1. First, let me ask are there recent trends in the Recreation Vehicle products that have impacted the design or amenities in RV campgrounds. The response categories are 1 = Not at all important; 5 = Neutral; 10 = Extremely Important.

	1 Not at all important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 Neutral**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10 Extremely Important**
Unit Length, Size										
Type of unit (motorhome, fifth wheel etc.)										
Sliders										
Engines (power, fuel cons..)										
Weight										
Solar Panels										
Total Power Demand (50 amp)										
Towing Requirements										
Total Length of Unit										
Amenities - Need for Cable, Satellite, etc.										
Other: specify										

Other: (Summarize responses)

2. What do you see as the major trends in RV markets, and what does this mean for RV campgrounds?

Ageing – implications on units purchased, length of stay, volume?
Family purchase – 35 – 54 – type of units, volumes, implications for RV campgrounds?

3. What would the main components (i.e., lots, services, amenities) of a successful RV campground?

(unprompted at first, then prompt for things such as: owned sites, leased sites, overnight (transient) sites, mix of cabins, tipis, a lodge, other fixed roof, community centre, specific site configuration or design i.e., exemplary practices. Also what are the Profit Centres that must be there to succeed).

4. How important is "Brand" to the RV campground market? For example, is it necessary in Canada to be KOA or Coast to Coast for the American market, or must we be listed in certain guides (e.g., Woodall's)?

5. What would your "typical" customer/member look for in a RV campground or campground when they are travelling? Describe the scalar range as per first question. (Check Yes)

Sites with:	1 **Not at all Important**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5 **Neutral**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	10 **Extremely Important**
Power – 15 amp										
Power – 30 amp										
Power – 50 amp										
Water										
Sewer										
Telephone hookup										
Cable TV										
Internet Cable										
Handicapped Access										
Other (specify)										

RV campgrounds with: (same scalars)	1 **Not at all Important**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5 **Neutral**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	10 **Extremely Important**
Location near major tourist attractions										
Location Near Urban Centres										
Treed Sites										
Good Site Separation/arrangement										
Gated security										
Group camping										
Quality Landscaping										
Paved Roads										
Community Centre										
Recreational Programming Services										
General Store										
Business Rooms										
Playground										

Fitness Centre										
Swimming Pool										
Marina										
Boat Rental										
Bicycle Rental										
Fishing Equipment Rental										
Propane supply										
Security										

For RV Campgrounds near urban centres, how important is it to have (Check Yes):

(same scalars)	1 Not at all important	2	3	4	5 Neutral	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely Important
Car Rental										
Ground Tour Operations										
RV Repair Facilities on Site/Nearby										
Gas/Service Station on Site/Nearby										
Taxi Facilities										
Public Transportation Facilities										
Travel Agency/Trip Planning Service										

6. Are there price points for RV campgrounds that could be defined as the "typical"/acceptable prices? (Range is OK, specify US or CDN dollars)

Type of Pricing	**Price Range**	**Comments (scale … per month, year, night, $US, $Can etc..**
RV Community with owned units		
Long Term Stay, Full Service i.e., Destination Parks		
Overnight, Full Service		
Overnight, Partial Services		

7. In your experience, is there anything we can learn from the evolution and development of RV campgrounds in Britain, Australia, Europe?

8. Are there other trends that you consider to be important in terms of RV campground development in the future?

Thank you very much for your time and effort in helping us with this study.

APPENDIX 6

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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